



EURIPIDIS

ALCESTIS



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*JERRAM*

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# EURIPIDES

## ALCESTIS

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

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PART I.—INTRODUCTION AND TEXT

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## PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

IN this edition the notes have undergone a further, and it is hoped a final revision, in order to bring the readings in several passages into conformity with those of the present text, as revised by Mr. Evelyn Abbott. It was found impracticable to remove these discrepancies until the previous edition became exhausted.

OXFORD,

*August, 1895.*

## PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

THE notes in this edition have been carefully revised, and in some cases re-written, upon reconsideration of the points involved, or from the suggestions of several friends and correspondents who have favoured me with their communications. With respect to the present note on l. 52, I agree with Mr. Sidgwick in regarding the use of the optative for the subjunctive, and not the omission of *āv*, as the proper subject of enquiry. I may state however that this had occurred to me independently of his note on *Agamemnon*, l. 20; but I am glad to have the opportunity of expressing my entire concurrence with the view which he there maintains.

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*August, 1883.*

## INTRODUCTION.

Early career of Euripides.—Plot of the *Alcestis*.—Tragedy and the 'Satyric' Drama.—The *Alcestis* a 'pro-satyric' play.—Forms of the original myth, and Euripides' treatment of it.—Arrangement of scenes.—The characters of the play: *Alcestis*, *Admetus*, *Pheres*, *Heracles*.—The concluding scene.—Criticism of the play.—Euripides compared with his predecessors; his religious and political opinions.—*Alcestis* by other authors.—Text of this edition and MSS. of Euripides.

EURIPIDES, the son of Mnesarchus or Mnesarchides, was born B.C. 480, the year of the battle of Salamis. He was thus a younger contemporary of Aeschylus, about fifteen years junior to Sophocles, and eleven or twelve years older than Socrates, who afterwards became his friend and one of his chief supporters. He appears to have devoted himself in early life to the pursuit of literature and the fine arts, and to have been the pupil of Anaxagoras, Protagoras, and Prodicus. In 455 B.C. (the year Aeschylus died) Euripides produced his first tragedy, the *Peliades*, no longer extant; and in 441 he gained the first tragic prize for a 'trilogy,' or group of three plays, the names of which have not been preserved. Three years later (B.C. 438) came the group containing the *ALCESTIS* and three others; for these Euripides gained only the second prize, the first being awarded to Sophocles. From this it is clear that although *Alcestis* is the earliest play that has survived (except the doubtful *Rhesus*), it is by no means a youthful effort, since it was produced when the author was over forty years of age, and in the maturity of his powers. It may be well to bear this in mind, when we come to examine the criticism, favourable or adverse, that has been passed upon the play itself.

The plot is briefly as follows. Admetus, king of Phærae, being destined to die, Apollo, grateful to him for past kindness during an enforced term of servitude, obtains leave of the Fates for the king to provide a substitute. After all his friends and relatives, even his aged parents, have declined to grant him the favour of dying in his stead, his wife Alcestis alone is found willing to undertake such a sacrifice; she accordingly dies, after taking an affectionate farewell of her husband and children. In the midst of their mourning Heracles arrives on his road to Thrace, where he has a certain 'labour' to perform at the bidding of his master Eurystheus. Admetus welcomes him as an old friend, and without mentioning his great sorrow presses him to accept hospitality, but excuses himself from joining his guest in the banquet-hall. During the meal Heracles scandalises the attendant by his boisterous behaviour in a house of mourning; but learning from him the true state of the case, he abandons in a moment his ill-timed levity, and rushes forth to the tomb, resolved to do battle with Death for his victim. After a severe struggle he rescues Alcestis from the grasp of her destroyer, brings her back to the palace veiled, and places her in the arms of her husband. This done, the hero goes on his way, promising to visit Admetus again on his return from the Thracian land.

It was the custom at Athens, during the greater Dionysiac festival, to present three tragedies in succession, usually but not always on kindred subjects; these were followed by a short after-piece of a lighter kind, known as a 'Satyric' play, and the whole formed a 'tetralogy' or series of four plays. Now, since the *Alcestis* was the last of such a series, it has been thought to be either a genuine satyric piece, or at least to partake of the satyric character. This is not a mere question about a *name*, and the answer to it must be sought in the origin of the Athenian drama. That drama took its rise from the *dithyramb* (διθύραμβος), a name given to lyric odes (afterwards developed into regular choruses) expressing the 'sufferings' (πάθη) of Dionysus. Herein, under the figure of varying fortunes undergone by the god himself, the natural changes of the seasons were portrayed. These odes constituted acts of worship, and the worshippers identified themselves with Dionysus, and imagined themselves to

be similarly affected. The actors<sup>1</sup> (as we may now call them) wore the costume of Satyrs, the traditional companions of Bacchus, and thus the Satyric disguise was an integral element in Tragedy<sup>2</sup> from the very first. But soon, by a process of refinement of which we have no exact account, the choruses were transferred from subjects connected with Dionysus to the other gods and heroes of Greek mythology, and then of course the costume and dances of Satyrs became inappropriate. This gave rise to the 'Satyric drama' as distinct from tragedy proper; a sportive piece, though not a comedy, in which Satyrs and such-like creatures still played a prominent part. The separation of this kind of drama from tragedy is supposed to have taken place about 520 B.C. or perhaps a little later; and it explains the custom we have noted, of introducing a 'Satyric' farce as an after-piece to the series of three tragedies, known as a 'trilogy.' The only extant specimen is the *Cyclops* of Euripides, in which we have a Chorus of Satyrs introduced as servants of Polyphemus, and finally delivered from their bondage by Ulysses and his companions. A comparison of the plot of this play with that of the *Alcestis* will show that the latter is not one of the true 'Satyric' kind; though we have seen that it occupied the place of one in the tetralogy above referred to. The connexion is not difficult to trace. The old Satyric drama was formed of tragic materials; its constituents were firstly Satyrs, that is beings far removed from civilisation, immodest and uncouth, but comparatively harmless to mankind; nay even beneficent sometimes, in a clumsy sort of way, as representing the *joyful* side of human nature. Secondly, there were brutal monsters, half divine and half human, who spurn all laws, and whose vast strength and powers of mischief render them positive nuisances to society. Hence it is the function of heroes, especially of Hercules, to rid the earth of such pests; and thus the subjugation of savage

<sup>1</sup> The addition of an actor (*ὑποκριτής*) answering the chorus, and thus giving rise to a regular *dialogue*, came much later. We are now speaking only of the members of the chorus itself, which was the germ of the whole.

<sup>2</sup> There is little doubt that the name *τραγωδία* arose from the 'goat-like' appearance of the actors in their Satyr dress.

monsters by superior force became the staple of a Satyric play. Neither of these elements is wanting in the *Alcestis*. Its plot turns upon the subjugation of Thanatos, or Death, a most injurious monster, who excites terror from the first scene onwards, until he is forced by Heracles to surrender his victim. Again, in the banquet-scene the hero exhibits that jovial satyr-like side of his character, which enabled him in intervals of relaxation to give full vent to mirth and jollity, and made him the traditional companion of Satyrs on all festive occasions. The *Alcestis* therefore, in virtue of such scenes as these, was no unfitting substitute for the conventional Satyric after-piece.

In its main situations it is a *tragedy* of the most pathetic kind, and this notwithstanding its happy termination, although Aristotle asserts that this is fatal to the essence of a true tragic plot. We do not think that Euripides would have accepted this *dictum*, since so many of his plays either have a distinctly fortunate end, or at least provide something by way of compensation for the previous misfortunes of the hero. And if, as Aristotle implies, the proper design of Tragedy be to excite and afterwards allay the emotions by means of pity and fear<sup>1</sup>, there are few plays better calculated to produce the desired effect than the one we are considering. It has been called a 'tragi-comedy'; but this, in our opinion, is a mistake. Of the three scenes usually cited in support of this view, that between Admetus and his father is too real, too terribly earnest, to be in any sense comic; while Apollo's dialogue with Death and the banquet scene of Heracles have been referred to their proper place in the *Satyric* drama, which had no connexion with comedy. At the same time it may be admitted, that the *Alcestis* never reaches the summit of tragic terror, as compared with other plays, for instance the *Medea*.

<sup>1</sup> He speaks of 'the purgation (*κάθαρσις*) of the emotions through pity and fear.' Whatever may be the exact meaning of this much disputed phrase, the metaphor is obviously a medical one, and describes the calming and moderation of these emotions after a sort of *feverish* excitement previously aroused. By learning to keep his 'pity and fear' within due bounds, and to direct them upon right objects, a man will attain the true pleasure derivable from tragedy.

The whole plot is so managed as to call forth the softer emotions<sup>1</sup>, and is, as Hartung describes it, 'idyllic' rather than 'tragic' in the most exact sense of the term.

The original myth on which the plot rests is told by different writers with certain variations. Its earliest form appears to be this. Apollo, being forced to serve Admetus because he had slain the Cyclopes<sup>2</sup>, and having been well treated by his master, helped him to get Alcestis in marriage from her father Pelias, king of Iolcos, the condition being that the intended husband should yoke together a boar and a lion in one chariot. Next Admetus incurred the anger of Artemis by neglecting to sacrifice to her at the marriage feast; and being in danger of his life he was saved by Apollo's intercession and the substitution of Alcestis in his room. Euripides takes up the story at this point, and alleges the slaughter of the Cyclopes, 'forgers of the divine fire,' as the reason of Apollo's servitude. Another version made this servitude an act of expiation on the part of the god for having slain the Python, which obliged him to purify himself from the stain of bloodshed. Pherae was the place of this purification, and the whole scene was enacted every eighth year in a *theoria*, or sacred procession, between that town and Delphi. Now whereas the Python represented a demon power and was associated with the old Chthonian or Earth-worship, it has been supposed that Apollo's master was none other than Hades himself, who was often designated by the title of Ἀδμητος, or the 'Invincible.' This seems to be confirmed by the fact that Hecate, a goddess of the under-world, was worshipped at Pherae under the title of Θεὰ Φεραία. Hermann sees in the whole account a mythical representation of actual events in connexion with the Delphian Apollo. He supposes that when an attempt was first made to substitute his purer worship for the old Chthonian rites (symbolised by the Python, as the guardian of the Earth's oracle at Delphi), the votaries of the god were driven to take refuge at

<sup>1</sup> Hence Wilken, in his dissertation *De Alcestide Euripidea* (1868), proposes a fourth division of the drama, to which he would give the distinctive name of 'pathetic.'

<sup>2</sup> See *Alcestis*, ll. 5-7. Another version of the story is given further on.



Pherae, where they were hospitably received and allowed to build a temple. Afterwards the inhabitants of the neighbouring Iolcos were admitted, in consideration of their superior resources, to a share in their solemnities, and the ritual of Apollo was celebrated with increased splendour by both states conjointly. This is thought to be symbolised in the marriage of the Pheraean Admetus with the Iolcian Alcestis, whose name (derived from ἀλκή) indicates wealth and power. Some dissensions having arisen, the new *cultus* soon began to decline, and was only saved from perishing by the voluntary surrender of the temple treasures, which however were afterwards recovered by the aid of a superior foreign force. It is unnecessary to point out the bearing of these latter incidents upon the traditional story of Admetus, and it is far from improbable that some real events, such as Hermann suggests, may have determined the form in which it appears. Lastly, the legend has been referred to that ever-recurring series of old-world myths, which the sun in his yearly course, the alternations of light and darkness, and all the varying phenomena of Nature are supposed to have suggested. In these the bondage of Apollo in the house of Admetus and the subjection of Heracles to Eurystheus alike represent the Sun, toiling in his unwearied round for the benefit of mortal men; and in the tale of Alcestis Heracles appears 'as the kindly benefactor, who goes down into the dark land, and there wrests from the grasp of death the fair twilight, which dies away at sundown, to be brought back again in the morning<sup>1</sup>.'

But however interesting it may be to speculate upon the probable sources of the myth, what we have chiefly to consider is the use made of it by Euripides as a dramatist. He of course took the story as he found it, selecting such incidents as suited his purpose, and treated it simply as a domestic drama of modern Athenian life, the supernatural element being assumed as perfectly familiar in what must have been to most of the spectators a 'nursery tale' of their childhood. But since, as Aristotle observes in his *Poetics*, there are some to whom even the best known stories are unknown<sup>2</sup>, the poet, following the fashion of

<sup>1</sup> Cox, *Tales of Ancient Greece*, Introduction, p. xxiii.

<sup>2</sup> Also for an opposite reason. The very fact that these legendary



his time, introduces his plot by a short explanatory prologue, spoken in the person of Apollo, and afterwards passing into a dialogue between him and Death. This latter portion has been censured by some critics<sup>1</sup>; unjustly as we think. If there seems to be anything repulsive *per se* in the notion of a barter of lives with Death, we must remember that this is an integral part of the legend; moreover the failure of Apollo to establish a *commercial* transaction with his adversary is quite in keeping with the character of one who 'alone of all deities regardeth not bribes.' That Phœbus should appear in direct conflict with the monster from whose power he had already delivered Admetus is natural enough, and the colloquial style of their encounter is sufficiently excused, at least in a 'pro-satyrical' play<sup>2</sup>, by the well-known fondness of the Athenians for disputations of this kind. We may be sure that Euripides purposely so arranged his opening scenes, that from the outset he might arouse the interest and amuse the fancy of his audience. As to the exquisite *art* with which the first Act is managed, there can be no question. The radiant Archer-god, 'a stationed glory'<sup>3</sup> at the portal, the black-robed demon Death, the chorus distraught with fears for the royal house, and hoping even against hope—all this appeals most powerfully to the feelings, and marks the poet as a consummate master of his art. As a dramatic personage<sup>4</sup>, Thanatos may be put by the side of Cratos and Bia (Strength and Force) in the *Prometheus*, Lyssa (Madness) in the *Hercules Furens*, and the Lar Familiaris in the *Aulularia* of Plautus. Similarly in the old

stories *were* so well known may have made the poet less careful about 'spoiling the plot' (as we should say) by giving a sketch of it beforehand.

<sup>1</sup> The Quarterly Review, for instance, characterises the dialogue between Apollo and Death as 'only fit for a couple of higglers at a pig-fair.' *Q. R. on Monk's Alcestis*, vol. xv. p. 115 (1816).

<sup>2</sup> See pp. viii, ix.

<sup>3</sup> Browning, *Balaustion*, p. 25. The whole of this passage should be read in illustration of the text.

<sup>4</sup> *I. e.* not merely personified in narrations or addresses, as in Hom. *Il.* iv. 231; Soph. *Aias*, 864, &c.

English 'Morality plays' Death and the Fool are pitted against each other, the latter trying various shifts to elude his adversary, but always being beaten by him in the end. Milton also, in the *Paradise Lost*, introduces Sin and Death as persons, who were intended to appear as characters in his drama, according to the original design of the poem.

The character of *Alcestis*, in whom the chief interest of the play is centred, presents less difficulty than those of Admetus and his father Pheres. She is a model of female heroism and wifely devotion, unrivalled in history or fiction; and her self-sacrifice is due, not to any depreciation of her own life—*ψυχῆς γὰρ οὐδέν ἐστι τιμιώτερον* (l. 301)—but to a high sense of duty combined with pure unselfishness. Even her love for Admetus, though unquestionably real, is not represented as the ruling motive of her action. Her last address to him is rather dignified than tender. She speaks of her voluntary death as an act prompted by 'reverence' toward himself; one moreover that she was in no way bound to perform, had not his parents failed in what was clearly their *duty*. But since 'the gods had so ordered it,' her life must needs be sacrificed for the life of him, upon whom the fortunes of the royal house depended. All her expressions of love and tenderness are reserved for her children, the future 'rulers of *my* house<sup>1</sup>,' and all her thoughts, till the moment of her departure, are occupied with anxiety about their welfare. The conception of a heroine so noble, even if it stood alone in his plays, would be sufficient to show that Euripides was not the persistent 'woman-hater' he is commonly supposed to have been<sup>2</sup>. The recognition of unselfish *patriotism* as the ruling motive in the case of *Alcestis* may help us to understand the conduct of Admetus, both as regards his wife, and as regards his father

<sup>1</sup> *Τούτους ἀνάσχου δεσπότας ἐμῶν δόμων*, l. 304.

<sup>2</sup> This epithet (*μισογύνης*), so far as it describes his hatred of female profligacy prevalent in his day, is amply justified by numerous passages in his plays. Yet we may appeal to his conception of heroines like *Alcestis*, *Iphigenia*, *Macaria*, and others, to show that he could appreciate the virtues of the other sex wherever he found them.

Pheres. At first sight he is simply a craven, and all his professions of conjugal affection seem mere hypocrisy, because after all he might have resigned himself to his fate, and neither sought nor accepted any substitute. Hence various alterations of the plot have been suggested; that of Hermann, for instance, who thinks Alcestis might have been made to devote herself without the knowledge of Admetus, who should have discovered the truth only when too late to save her life<sup>1</sup>. But this would be to rewrite, not only the play, but the legend on which it is founded. The story required that somehow Admetus should save his own life at another's expense, and Euripides had to deal with this requirement as he best could. This he does very cleverly; for by concentrating our attention upon the crowning virtues of Admetus, his piety and his hospitality to strangers, and by describing his sorrow for the lost one in language that seems to assure us of its reality, he contrives to make us forget that the queen's life might have been saved, and that no 'inevitable bond of necessity'<sup>2</sup>, but the free will of a loving wife, fulfilling her husband's desire, was the occasion of her doom. But in fact the conduct of Admetus needed little excuse to an Athenian audience. From the Greek point of view the life of one man was better than that of ten thousand women<sup>3</sup>, and the life of a king, ruling for his subjects' good, was the most valuable of all. This *patriotic* consideration is taken for granted, and is implied rather than distinctly urged even in the altercation between Admetus and Pheres, where the value of their respective lives is the principal point in question. That scene is outrageously repulsive to modern feeling; not so, we presume, to the minds of the original spectators, to whom it would be only too real. The extreme contempt for old age prevalent in Athens during the fifth century B.C. is remarkable even in that enterprising time, when, as we can easily understand, the feebleness of declining years must have been an unmitigated

<sup>1</sup> This device is adopted by Wieland, also (with variations) in the lately published play of *Alcestis* by Mr. Todhunter, who works out his plot from this starting-point with considerable skill.

<sup>2</sup> Chorus, l. 984 καὶ σ' ἐν ἀφύκτοισι χερῶν εἶλε θεὰ δαεσμοῖς.

<sup>3</sup> εἰς γ' ἀνὴρ κρείσσω γυναικῶν μυρίων ὀρᾶν φάος. *Iph. in Aulide*, 1394.

misfortune<sup>1</sup>. Yet the fact is patent to every student of the Athenian dramatists, and the language of Admetus to his father by no means exaggerates it. Pheres perhaps excites more of our sympathy than Euripides might have thought justifiable, and may appear to *us* to get rather the best of the argument; but no Athenian of that time would for one moment hesitate to condemn the deplorable selfishness of an old man, who preferred dragging out an ignominious existence to the glory of dying for his son<sup>2</sup>, who was the king of the land. The culminating point of baseness is reached in his avowal—*κακῶς ἀκούειν οὐ μέλει θανόντι μοι*, which Admetus, true to Greek ideas about ‘reputation after death,’ stigmatises as a ‘shameless sentiment<sup>3</sup>.’ When besides all this we consider the amusement which this smart wordy encounter would afford to a repartee-loving Athenian audience, we may safely conclude that the scene in question was one of the most popular in the play.

We must not then, if we would understand the *Alcestis* aright, allow our modern ideas either of gallantry or of reverence to old age to warp the judgment, when dealing with those of another people and of other times, however revolting to our imagination such views of conduct may be<sup>4</sup>. Nevertheless, although Euripides has done the best for Admetus under the circumstances,

<sup>1</sup> See Mahaffy's *Euripides*, p. 108, and the passage he quotes from the *Supplices*, l. 1080, beginning *ὦ δυσπάλαιστον γῆρας, ὡς μισῶ σ' ἔχων*.

<sup>2</sup> Contrast the sentiment of Andromache (l. 410 of the play), when, called to choose between her own life and that of her son, she exclaims—

*ἐμοὶ δ' ὄνειδος μὴ θανεῖν ὑπὲρ τέκνου*.

<sup>3</sup> Joddrell compares the prayer of Maecenas in Seneca, who calls it ‘a base begging for life’—

‘*Debilem facito manu,  
Debilem pede, coxa;  
Tuber adstrue gibberum;  
Lubricos quate dentes.  
Vita dum superest, bene est.*’

<sup>4</sup> As was the case with Ovid, writing thus to his wife from exile—

‘*Si mea mors redimenda tua, quod abominor, esset,  
Admeti conjunx, quam sequeris, erat.*’

*Epist. ex Ponto*, iii. 1, 105.

he has hardly succeeded in making his character interesting. He is pious, liberal, hospitable even to a fault,—the whole plot indeed turns upon the reward of piety—he will do nothing that he considers base, he loves the company of the good; but he lacks the active manly virtues of stoutheartedness, resolute defiance of danger, even of fortitude under misfortune. Euripides himself seems to have had some misgivings on this point, since he makes Admetus deprecate the probable reproach of ‘an enemy’ (he says nothing about its *justice*) for his cowardly fear of death and want of filial affection. And though his life was spared, he was left so hopelessly wretched, as to make the remainder of it useless to himself and his people. Hence, to avert a public misfortune, some means of restoring Alcestis must be found; and what so welcome to an age that was shortly to produce the *Phaëdo*, as a sequel which told of a triumph over the powers of the infernal world?

The character of Heracles will be best understood from our previous observations on the Satyric drama. The banquet scene, in which he plays so boisterous a part, would indeed have been out of place in a pure tragedy, but is quite in keeping with the requirements of a piece, such as we believe the *Alcestis* to be. In this play Heracles appears to great advantage in comparison with his true ‘Satyric’ character, so far as we can judge from the fragments that have come down to us. The dramatists generally take strange liberties with the redoubtable Tirynthian hero, representing him as a voracious glutton, whom no amount of meat and drink can satisfy. ‘If you could but see him eat!’ says Epicharmus in the *Busiris*. ‘How he clashes his jaws, gnashes his grinders, snorts through his nostrils and lifts his ears! and hark, what a blast of wind comes roaring through his gullet!’ In the *Alcestis* there is just enough of this element (taking the servant’s report as literal fact) to give a flavour to the scene. But in the main Heracles appears as an intrepid generous soul, enjoying the good things of life while he may, and accepting its rough side with cheerfulness, even death itself, if needful. He is not drunk, but ‘filled with food and gladness;’ he esteems the present hour alone as worth enjoying, and invites the

servant to join in his mirth, because he cannot bear to see a fellow-creature in melancholy mood, when he believes there is no occasion for it. But mark the sudden change when he learns the truth about Alcestis. The knowledge of it sobers him in a moment; he is instantly ready for action and rushes to the rescue. Now, as Mr. Browning finely expresses it—

‘In a spasm and splendour of resolve  
All at once did the god surmount the man<sup>1</sup>;’

and Heracles appears in his true character as the ‘helper of mankind.’ So regardless is he of good cheer merely for its own sake and at the wrong time, that even after his fierce struggle with the demon king he will not stay and share the rejoicings of Admetus for the recovery of Alcestis, but starts at once upon a new enterprise. The heroism of Heracles has been profitably contrasted with that of Alcestis<sup>2</sup>. If *he* had been required to perish by some lingering malady to save the life of his friend, he would never have consented; for by such an act no meed of valour, no manly fame was to be won, nor was there anything to counterbalance the sacrifice of a noble and most valuable life. Even for Admetus to contend with his wife on this ground would, as we have seen, according to Greek notions have been inexcusable.

With respect to the alleged ‘*stupidity*’ of Heracles, in not conjecturing the cause of the mourning in the house of Admetus<sup>3</sup>, we do not think the allegation is well founded. As a wild adventurous rover, little accustomed to scenes of domestic life, he would hardly be expected to know the precise amount of sorrow the death of a ‘stranger woman’ might cause in the royal household, especially after the assurance of his host that the deceased had been a dear friend of the family. Moreover (as Hermann justly observes), had Heracles guessed the truth at once, and insisted on his apprehensions being satisfied, so impulsive a creature must have rushed instantly to the rescue, and thus have

<sup>1</sup> *Balaustion*, p. 119. Mr. Browning’s delineation of the character of Heracles is perhaps his most successful effort.

<sup>2</sup> Hartung, *Euripides Restitutus*.

<sup>3</sup> *Quarterly Review*, vol. xv. p. 116.

precipitated the catastrophe of the play. It was far better to make the deliverance of Alcestis an act of expiation for abused hospitality, though the fault were committed unwillingly and in ignorance<sup>1</sup>. It has been judged an unnecessary aggravation of his dulness of understanding to make Heracles aware of the queen's undertaking to save her husband's life<sup>2</sup>. There is some justice in this criticism, although it is not unreasonable to suppose that Heracles might have been informed of a fact well known in the surrounding district<sup>3</sup>. All we can say is that Euripides could not have managed otherwise, taking the scene as it stands, since Admetus had no other way of justifying the *double entente*—*ἔστιν τε κοῦκέτ' ἔστιν*—than by reference to the undertaking which made her 'as good as dead' to him. He could not have related the circumstances here, without interrupting the dialogue, as well as repeating what had been previously told in the opening scene of the play; hence it was simpler to suppose his guest to be already aware of the facts. On the whole, Heracles is a fine noble character, second to none, save that of the heroine herself. 'The contrast of his homely practical force with the luxurious effusiveness of Admetus is one of the happiest features in the play. His victory moreover is greatly enhanced by the powerlessness of Apollo, the friend of the house, to obtain more than an exchange of victims: and the grim dialogue of Apollo and Death is clearly intended to show the miraculous powers of the mighty hero<sup>4</sup>.'

The last scene (from l. 1006 onwards) is admirably contrived. A sudden formal restoration of Alcestis to her husband would have made but a tame conclusion; but the sustained mystery

<sup>1</sup> *βία δὲ θυμοῦ τάσδ' ὑπερβαλὼν πύλας  
ἔπινον ἀνδρὸς ἐν φιλοξένου δόμοις.* ll. 829, 830.

<sup>2</sup> Wilken, *de Alceſtide*, p. 25, commenting on l. 524—  
*οἷδ' ἀντὶ σοῦ γε κατθανεῖν ὑφειμένην.*

<sup>3</sup> The maid-servant tells the Chorus, l. 156—

*καὶ ταῦτα μὲν δὴ πᾶς' ἐπίσταται πόλις.*

This certainly includes the township of Pherae, even if it has no wider application. See note on l. 156.

<sup>4</sup> Mahaffy, *Euripides*, p. 106.



about the veiled lady raises the excitement of the spectators to the highest pitch. More than once does Admetus seem in danger of losing his wife for ever by his persistent refusal to receive the stranger, and only when she is actually placed in his arms and the veil removed do we feel sure that the tale of Orpheus and Eurydice is not about to be reproduced with variations. The turn of the dialogue gives Heracles an opportunity of retaliating upon his host in a friendly way for the previous mystification as to the cause of his sorrow, while Admetus is enabled to prove his constancy to the departed by asserting his resolve to comply with her dying request that he would never marry again<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, the generosity of his nature is a second time put to the test, when he is required to receive a strange woman (as he believes) into his house under such trying circumstances. Yet even this trial, though he shrinks at first, he will not forego; all for the love of his friend.

The silence of Alcestis is at first sight strange, especially as an opportunity would otherwise have been afforded for introducing pathetic addresses, in the composition of which Euripides excelled. But first there was the difficulty about employing a third actor, and secondly there was a real belief in the necessity of silence before purification in cases of ceremonial uncleanness<sup>2</sup>. Also by representing Alcestis as not even yet entirely emancipated from the power of Hades, the fact of her having really died, which might otherwise have been doubted, is clearly enforced<sup>3</sup>. The combat with Death might indeed have been described by a messenger, or by Heracles himself. This however would only have prolonged the action of the play unnecessarily, and would not have been an original idea, for we learn from a fragment of the earlier *Alcestis* of Phrynichus that some such combat was there described. There are, it must be admitted, signs of hurry in the conclusion. The short speech

<sup>1</sup> Compare the request of Alcestis, l. 305—

καὶ μὴ 'πιγῆμης τοῖσδε μητρὶνὰν τέκνοισι—  
with ll. 1087, etc.

<sup>2</sup> See note on l. 1143.

<sup>3</sup> Hermann, *Dissertatio de Alcestide*, p. xiii (Monk).



of Admetus especially, ending with the bare statement οὐ γὰρ εὐτυχῶν ἀρνέσσομαι, seems inadequate to the joy of the occasion. But in his bewilderment at such an unexpected change of fortune, few words were perhaps best for him, and Euripides probably felt that the play was already long enough for its purpose, as the fourth of a tetralogy, and that its main interest was over by this time.

Although the *Alcestis* cannot, from its exceptional character, be fairly taken as a *representative* play, it is not lacking in suggestive materials for the student of Euripides as a dramatist. To assign this poet his true place in tragedy has always been a difficult task, and from his own time to the present he has been praised or censured alternately, as the legitimate improver or the vulgar degrader of tragic art. Lately a reaction has arisen in his favour, and there is danger lest his merits should even be over-rated; but modern critics are at any rate alive to the fact, that any estimate of Euripides must be one-sided which fails to take into account the exceptional circumstances of the times<sup>1</sup>. That was a period of transition, of free thought and enquiry, and our poet had become deeply imbued with the sceptical spirit, which pervaded Athenian society towards the close of the fifth century B.C. Hence he is necessarily inconsistent, and often self-contradictory in dealing with questions of religion, politics, social order, and public or private morality. Now inasmuch as the drama had long been recognised at Athens as a legitimate vehicle of instruction<sup>2</sup>, it follows that the mental attitude of the poet towards all these questions will be found reflected in his plays. What this means in the case of Euripides is best seen by comparing him with his two great predecessors.

Aeschylus, with his earnest reverent faith in the reality of divine government, made *Nemesis*, or the law of divine retribution, the predominant motive of his tragedies. So absorbed was he in this one great religious idea, that he concentrates the

<sup>1</sup> See Paley's Preface to vol. i of his *Euripides*; Symonds' *Greek Poets*, 1st Series, chap. vii; Mahaffy's *Euripides*, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek drama has been regarded as combining the functions of the modern pulpit and of the daily press. It did all this, and more.

whole attention upon its working, and introduces his heroes less as individual characters than as living illustrations of the law. Sophocles, while he upholds the law in all its rigour, bids us mark the characters of those under its influence; we are shown the *men*, Oedipus, Aias, and the rest; and their sins and consequent suffering are viewed as a discipline or 'school of affliction.' The ancestral curse of the legend is there, but in the back-ground, and the moral law reigns supreme. With Euripides all this is so greatly changed, that some have denied his belief in tragic destiny or in any 'moral order' of things whatever<sup>1</sup>. This is untrue. Euripides takes humanity just as he finds it; only he does not dogmatise upon the causes of human misfortune, ascribing it either to the anger of an avenging deity or to breaches of the 'unwritten laws divine<sup>2</sup>.' He was a thinker, and lived, as we have said, in a thinking age, which was subjecting the old foundations of belief to a most rigorous scrutiny. Hence he varies in his assertions, at one time referring the conduct of human affairs to Chance (τύχη), at another time to Necessity (ἀνάγκη). He could not honestly uphold the popular creed as a whole, seeing that much of it was degrading and immoral; yet he hesitates to adopt the conclusion that *no* religion is best for man. His desire was for a system of practical morality, freed from the element of superstition; and though he sometimes despairs, he seems on the whole to have believed that such a system was attainable. But since the popular creed was a deep-seated fact, he could not ignore its existence, nor banish the gods entirely from his stage. The time-honoured constituents of tragedy might not be altered or set aside, but often, it must be confessed, the poet is at war with his materials. The *Alcestis* is a good instance of such a conflict; the more so, because it exhibits no overt signs of rebellion against orthodox beliefs. It is founded upon an ancient sacerdotal legend; its moral is the reward of piety—not in the abstract, but to a god *as* a god; the continued prosperity of Admetus being the result of his good

<sup>1</sup> Bunsen, *God in History*; Schlegel, *Dramatic Literature*; Donaldson, *Greek Theatre*.

<sup>2</sup> ἄγραπτα καὶ σφαλῆ θεῶν νόμιμα. Soph. *Antigone*, 454.

services first to Apollo, secondly to Heracles<sup>1</sup>. Still there is an amount of 'free handling' of sacred subjects, that might well have shocked the sensibilities of a devout old-fashioned Athenian. The human element of deity, in its least creditable aspect, is emphasised, not to say exaggerated, in the record of the mutual jealousies of Zeus and Apollo, with which the play opens, and in the unseemly wrangle of the latter with Death about their respective 'prerogatives.' Here certainly, and to some extent in the 'banquet scene' also, we feel that Euripides is taking full advantage of the licence which a 'pro-satyrical' piece allowed him, of saying in effect to his audience—'These be the gods ye worship!' Again, the irresistible power of destiny, so strongly manifested throughout the play and in the fine ode to Necessity (ll. 964, &c.), is overcome at last by mere physical force, in the rescue of one of Death's victims without any compensation to the infernal powers. Lastly, the heroine herself is actuated rather by a sense of practical piety than of religion. Her attitude towards the gods is one of resignation<sup>2</sup>, nor does she neglect the customary acts of devotion, prayer and the decoration of altars<sup>3</sup>, when the fatal day has come. Still on her death-bed she seems hardly to recognise the deities, save as adverse powers that vex her, calling not upon them, but upon the clear light of day<sup>4</sup>, the fleeting clouds and the halls of her loved Iolkos, in spite of her husband's solicitation—*λίσσου δὲ τοὺς κρατοῦντας οἰκτεῖραι θεούς*.

Compared with some of our author's later plays, the *Alcestis* is not altogether an extreme specimen of innovation upon earlier dramatic traditions. Its emotional and pathetic character, the predominant interest of its *plot*<sup>5</sup>, its scenic effects, exhibitions of repartee and other accessories—all mark it as distinctively

<sup>1</sup> *ὀσίλου γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ὅσιος ὦν ἐτύγχανον*, l. 10.

*θεοσεβῆ φῶτα κεδνὰ πράξειν*, l. 605.

<sup>2</sup> ll. 297, 298.

<sup>3</sup> ll. 162–172.

<sup>4</sup> 'Sun and thou light of day, and heavenly dance  
O' the fleet cloud-figure . . . nuptial chamber  
In that Iolkos of my ancestors.'—BROWNING.

<sup>5</sup> See Mahaffy, *Euripides*, pp. 45, 46, for the distinction between dramas of 'plot' and those of 'character' and 'situation.'

‘Euripidean.’ On the other hand, the complications of the plot do not excite our curiosity so far as to draw off our attention from the separate characters of the play, two of whom, Admetus and Heracles, have always been a fertile subject for discussion. We miss also the later devices of the *deus ex machina*, or arbitrary interference of a god at the conclusion<sup>1</sup>, and of the long explanatory prologue; that in the *Alcestis* being merely a brief summary of the previous circumstances, but not (save by a bare hint at ll. 65, &c.), anticipating the catastrophe. The Chorus especially retains the functions assigned to it in the older drama. Originally it performed its part alone; after one or more actors were introduced, it still spoke or sang in sympathy with them, and as one deeply interested in the action. But in proportion to the development of the dialogue, this function of the Chorus decreased in importance; soon the Chorus itself became a mere accessory, and finally ceased to appear at all. The religious element of the drama, in connexion with the worship of Dionysus, was giving way to the purely theatrical; and this was a sign of the times which no poet, even had he wished, could have effectually resisted. But in the *Alcestis*, as in *Hecuba* and some other plays, the Choral odes are all in harmony with the successive scenes of the action. The interest felt by the old men of Pherae in the fortunes of the royal house is intense; they mourn or rejoice in concert with their king, ‘as friend with friend<sup>2</sup>,’ in accordance with the rule afterwards laid down by the Roman critic—

‘Actoris partes chorus officiumque virile  
Defendat, neu quid medios intercinat actus  
Quod non proposito conducat et haereat apte<sup>3</sup>.’

The story of *Alcestis* has been dramatised by other poets besides Euripides. A verse, apparently from a satyric play, by Sophocles, describing the servitude of Apollo, is quoted by

<sup>1</sup> As in the *Hippolytus*, *Supplices*, *Ion*, *Helena*, *Electra*, *Orestes*, and probably in both the *Iphigenias*.

<sup>2</sup> ὡς φίλος φίλῳ, l. 369.

<sup>3</sup> Horace, *Ars Poet.* 193. See the sequel of this citation in the note on l. 674.

Plutarch. Phrynichus we have already mentioned (p. xx), and Athenaeus has preserved some lines of an *Alcestis* by the comic poet Antiphanes. In Latin, Naevius, Accius, and possibly Ennius, treated the same subject, but it is doubtful whether the work of Accius was an original effort of genius, or merely a translation from Euripides. Passing to modern times, we find an Italian *Alceste* by Martello (1715), in which great liberties are taken with the old plot; and towards the end of the same century Alfieri translated and afterwards imitated the Euripidean play. On the French stage a revival of the Greek drama by means of translations and adaptations began about the sixteenth century. Euripides was especially popular, and *Alcestis* was a favourite theme. An opera with this title by Quinault and Lully was performed in 1674; Grange-Chancel wrote an *Alceste* in 1703, (in which the heroine, on her return from Hades, utters the single word 'Admète'); in 1727 appeared Boissy's play entitled *Admète et Alceste*. It is said also that Racine, struck by the beauty of the legend, designed an *Alceste* to follow his *Andromaque* (1668), but changed his mind shortly before his death. Mr. Todhunter's *Alcestis* (1879) has been mentioned above (p. xv). Previously no English poet seems to have chosen this theme (Mr. Browning's *Balaustion* being professedly a 'transcript from Euripides' with comments between); but Shakespeare had made use of the conclusion of the story in the last scene of his *Winter's Tale*<sup>1</sup>.

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The text of this edition follows the readings of the best MSS. so far as possible. It therefore fairly represents the text of Kirchhoff (8vo. edition). Emendations are marked with an asterisk, and passages retained on the authority of the MSS., but probably more or less corrupt, are marked with an obelus.

It may be well to state briefly that the most trustworthy MSS. of Euripides, containing the *Alcestis*, are the Codex Vaticanus of the twelfth century, and the Codex Havniensis of a later date, marked by Kirchhoff as B and C respectively. Those of fair

<sup>1</sup> See note to l. 1121.

repute are the Harleian (from l. 1031 to end of play), the Palatine, No. 287, in the Vatican library, and the Florentine, No. 2, marked *A*, *B*, and *C*; four others (one Parisian and three Florentines), marked *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, by the same editor, are of quite secondary importance.

A small treatise entitled *Euripidea*<sup>1</sup>, by Siegfried Mekler, has lately been published at Vienna. One at least of his suggestions deserves notice. In ll. 673, 674 the chorus interposes with the distich—

παύσασθ' ἄλλης γὰρ ἢ παροῦσα συμφορὰ,  
ὦ παῖ·<sup>2</sup> πατρὸς δὲ μὴ παροξύνῃς φρένας.

Here the words ὦ παῖ were reasonably suspected by more than one editor, as unsuitable in the mouth of courtiers addressing their king, and as probably repeated by mistake from the following line—ὦ παῖ, τίν' αὐχεῖς, &c. Also the plural παύσασθε seemed inappropriate, when only one of the parties had as yet spoken. Mekler, therefore, noticing that elsewhere the chorus always addresses Admetus by his name, has proposed to read Ἄδμηθ' ἄλλης γὰρ, &c., and παῦσαι for ὦ παῖ in the next line. He endeavours to show, by a comparison of the two readings when written in capitals, how the mistake might have arisen. In l. 795 he suspects an interpolation from ll. 829, 832 of the words τάσδ' ὑπερβαλὼν πύλας (τύχας), στεφάνοις πυκασθείς, and a similar interpolation in l. 817 of καὶ κουρὰν . . . στολμούς τε, proposing to read ὑμῖν for ἡμῖν and assigning the whole line (with καὶ κουρὰν, &c., omitted) to Heracles. We leave these last conjectures to the judgment of competent critics, but have thought it worth while to record them, as among the latest contributions to text criticism upon this play.

<sup>1</sup> *Euripidea*, Textkritische Studien, von Siegfried Mekler, Wien, 1879.

<sup>2</sup> The MSS. reading: the present text has ἀναξ.

The **Prologue** (πρόλογος) is all that part of a play which precedes the first entrance of the Chorus. It is generally recited by a single actor, but in this play the entrance speech by Apollo passes into a dialogue with Thanatos.

The **Parodus** (πάροδος), or 'passage-song,' was sung by the Chorus while advancing to their places, originally in anapaestic (υυ-) or some similar measure, to accompany the march. The other choral odes, sung by the Chorus in their 'station' in the orchestra, were called **Stasima** (στάσιμα).

**Epeisodia** (ἐπεισόδια), or 'episodes,' are all the portions intervening between complete odes of the Chorus; in other words, the *dialogue*, which now forms the main part of the play, but was originally an insertion between the choral songs.

The **Exodus** (ἐξόδος), 'exit,' or concluding scene, is all that follows the last *stasimon*, having no choral ode after it.

The Choruses themselves (unless they were very short) were divided into **Strophe** (στροφή) and **Antistrophe** (ἀντιστροφή). The *strophe* was sung by the Chorus while moving in one direction from left to right towards the side of the orchestra, the *antistrophe* during a reverse movement to the left. The metre in these two divisions is made to correspond, either by similar feet or their equivalents, as spondees to dactyls or anapaests, trochees or iambi to tribrachs, and the like.

An **Epode** (ἐπῳδός), or 'after-song,' is sometimes added in a different metre, concluding the choral ode.

A Greek play was not divided, like our modern plays, into acts and scenes. But all the earlier portion, as far as the first 'episode,' may be taken as equivalent to a first act, the remaining acts being represented by the successive *Epeisodia*, while the entrance of each important character may be considered to mark the beginning of a new scene.





# ALCESTIS

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

APOLLO.

THANATOS.

CHORUS *of aged Pheraeans.*

MAID-SERVANT *of Alcestis.*

ALCESTIS, *wife of Admetus.*

SERVANT *of Admetus.*

ADMETUS, *King of Pherae.*

EUMELUS, *son of Admetus and Alcestis.*

HERACLES.

PERES, *father of Admetus.*

# ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

## PROLOGUE.

(The scene is a space before the palace of Admetus at Pherae in Thessaly. Enter APOLLO from the interior.)

### ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ.

ὦ δώματ' Ἀδμήτει, ἐν οἷς ἔτλην ἐγὼ  
θῆσαν τράπεζαν αἰνέσαι, θεός περ ὦν.  
Ζεὺς γὰρ κατακτὰς παῖδα τὸν ἐμὸν αἵτιος  
Ἀσκληπιόν, στέρνοισιν ἐμβαλὼν φλόγα  
οὐδ' ἄν χολωθεῖς τέκτονας δίου πυρὸς 5  
κτείνω Κύκλωπας· καὶ με θητεύειν πατὴρ  
θνητῷ παρ' ἀνδρὶ τῶνδ' ἄποιν' ἠνάγκασεν.  
ἐλθὼν δὲ γαῖαν τήνδ' ἐβουφόρβουν ξένῳ,  
καὶ τόνδ' ἔσωζον οἶκον ἐς τόδ' ἡμέρας.  
ὅσιον γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ὅσιος ὦν ἐτύγχανον, 10  
παιδὸς Φέρητος, ὃν θανεῖν ἐρρυσάμην,  
Μοίρας δολώσας· ἤνεσαν δέ μοι θεαὶ  
Ἀδμητον Ἀΐδην τὸν παραντίκ' ἐκφυγεῖν,  
ἄλλον διαλλάξαντα τοῖς κάτω νεκρόν.  
πάντας δ' ἐλέγξας καὶ διεξελθὼν φίλους, 15  
πατέρα γεραίαν θ' ἢ σφ' ἔτικτε μητέρα,  
οὐχ εὖρε πλην γυναικὸς ὅστις ἤθελε  
θανεῖν πρὸ κείνου μηδ' ἔτ' εἰσορᾶν φάος,  
ἢ νῦν κατ' οἶκον ἐν χεροῖν βαστάζεται.

ψυχorraγούσα· τῇδε γάρ σφ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ  
 θανεῖν πέπρωται καὶ μεταστῆναι βίου.  
 ἐγὼ δέ, μὴ μίασμά μ' ἐν δόμοις κίχῃ,  
 λείπω μελάθρων τῶνδε φιλτάτην στέγην.  
 ἤδη δὲ τόνδε Θάνατον εἰσορῶ πέλας,  
 ἱερῇ θανόντων, ὅς νιν εἰς Ἄιδου δόμους  
 μέλλει κατάξει· συμμέτρως δ' ἀφίκετο  
 φρουρῶν τόδ' ἡμάρ, ὧ θανεῖν αὐτὴν χρεών.

20

25

(Enter THANATOS from below, a figure robed in black and armed with a sword.)

## ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ.

ᾄ ᾄ.

τί σὺ πρὸς μελάθροις; τί σὺ τῇδε πολεῖς,  
 Φοῖβ'; ἀδικεῖς αὖ τιμὰς ἐνέρων  
 ἀφοριζόμενος καὶ καταπαύων.  
 οὐκ ἤρκεσέ σοι μόνον Ἀδμήτου  
 διακωλύσαι, Μοίρας δολίῳ  
 σφήλαντι τέχνῃ; νῦν δ' ἐπὶ τῇδ' αὖ  
 χέρα τοξήρη φρουρεῖς ὀπλίσας,  
 ἢ τόδ' ὑπέστη πόσιν ἐκλύσας  
 αὐτὴν προθανεῖν Πελίου παῖς.

30

35

ΑΠ. θάρσει· δίκην τοι καὶ λόγους κεδνούς ἔχω.

ΘΑ. τί δῆτα τόξων ἔργον, εἰ δίκην ἔχεις;

ΑΠ. σύννηθες αἰεὶ ταῦτα βαστάζειν ἐμοί.

40

ΘΑ. καὶ τοῖσδε γ' οἴκοις ἐκδίκως προσώφελεῖν.

ΑΠ. φίλου γὰρ ἀνδρὸς συμφοραῖς βαρύνομαι.

ΘΑ. καὶ νοσφιεῖς με τοῦδε δευτέρου νεκροῦ;

ΑΠ. ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἐκείνον πρὸς βίαν σ' ἀφειλόμην.

ΘΑ. πῶς οὖν ὑπὲρ γῆς ἐστι κοῦ κάτω χθονός;

45

ΑΠ. δάμαρτ' ἀμείψας, ἦν σὺ νῦν ἤκεις μέτα.

ΘΑ. καπάξομαί γε νερτέραν ὑπὸ χθόνα.

ΑΠ. λαβὼν ἴθ'· οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' ἂν εἰ πείσαιμι σε.

ΘΑ. κτείνειν γ' ὅν ἂν χρῆ; τοῦτο γὰρ τετάγμεθα.

ΑΠ. οὐκ, ἀλλὰ τοῖς μέλλουσι θάνατον ἐμβαλεῖν. 50

ΘΑ. ἔχω λόγον δὴ καὶ προθυμίαν σέθεν.

ΑΠ. ἔστ' οὖν ὅπως Ἄλκηστις ἐς γῆρας μόλοι;

ΘΑ. οὐκ ἔστι· τιμαῖς καμὲ τέρπεσθαι δόκει.

ΑΠ. οὗτοι πλέον γ' ἂν ἢ μίαν ψυχὴν λάβοις.

ΘΑ. νέων φθινόντων μείζον ἄρνυμαι γέρας. 55

ΑΠ. καὶ γραυς ὀληται, πλουσίως ταφήσεται.

ΘΑ. πρὸς τῶν ἐχόντων, Φοῖβε, τὸν νόμον τίθης.

ΑΠ. πῶς εἶπας; ἀλλ' ἢ καὶ σοφὸς λέληθας ὦν;

ΘΑ. ὠνοῖντ' ἂν οἷς πάρεστι γηραιούς θανεῖν.

ΑΠ. οὐκ οὐ δοκεῖ σοι τήνδε μοι δοῦναι χάριν; 60

ΘΑ. οὐ δῆτ'· ἐπίστασαι δὲ τοὺς ἐμούς τρόπους.

ΑΠ. ἐχθρούς γε θνητοῖς καὶ θεοῖς στυγνομένους.

ΘΑ. οὐκ ἂν δύναιο πάντ' ἔχειν ἂ μὴ σε δεῖ.

ΑΠ. ἢ μὴν σὺ παύσει, καίπερ ὦμος ὦν ἄγαν

τοῖος Φέρητος εἴσι πρὸς δόμους ἀνὴρ, 65

Εὐρυσθέως πέμψαντος ἱππείου μετὰ

ὄχημα Θρήκης ἐκ τόπων δυσχειμέρων,

ὃς δὴ ξενωθεὶς τοῖσδ' ἐν Ἀδμήτου δόμοις

βία γυναῖκα τήνδε σ' ἐξαιρήσεται.

κοῦθ' ἢ παρ' ἡμῶν σοι γενήσεται χάρις 70

δράσεις θ' ὁμοίως ταῦτ', ἀπεχθήσει τ' ἐμοί.

ΘΑ. πόλλ' ἂν σὺ λέξας οὐδὲν ἂν πλέον λάβοις·

ἢ δ' οὖν γυνὴ κατέισιν εἰς Αἰδου δόμους.

στεῖχω δ' ἐπ' αὐτήν, ὥς κατάρξωμαι ξίφει·

ἱερὸς γὰρ οὗτος τῶν κατὰ χθονὸς θεῶν 75

οὔτου τόδ' ἔγχος κρατὸς ἀγνίσῃ τρίχα.

(Exeunt APOLLO and THANATOS. The first leaves the scene entirely, the second passes into the house.)

## PARODUS.

(The CHORUS enters.)

## ΧΟΡΟΣ.

τί ποθ' ἡσυχία πρόσθεν μελάθρων;

τί σεσίγηται δόμος Ἀδμήτου;

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ φίλων πέλας ἔστ' οὐδεῖς,

ὅστις ἂν εἴποι πότερον φθιμένην

80

χρὴ βασίλειαν πενθεῖν, ἢ ζῶσ'

ἔτι φῶς λεύσσει Πελίου παῖς

Ἄλκηστις, ἐμοὶ πᾶσί τ' ἀρίστη

δόξασα γυνή

πόσιν εἰς αὐτῆς γεγενῆσθαι.

85

κλύει τις ἢ στεναγμὸν ἢ

στροφή α'

χερῶν κτύπον κατὰ στέγας

ἢ γόον ὥς πεπραγμένων;

οὐ μὰν οὐδέ τις ἀμφιπόλων

στατίζεται ἀμφὶ πύλας.

90

εἰ γὰρ μετακύμιος ἄτας,

ὦ Παιάν, φανείης.

## ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ.

οὗ τ' ἂν φθιμένης γ' ἐσιώπων.

HM. νέκυς ἤδη.

HM. οὐ δὴ φροῦδός γ' ἐξ οἴκων.

HM. πόθεν; οὐκ αὐχῶ. τί σε θαρσύνει;

95

HM. πῶς ἂν ἔρημον τάφον Ἀδμητος

κεδυῆς ἂν ἔπραξε γυναικός;

XO. πυλῶν πάροιθε δ' οὐχ ὁρῶ

ἀντιστροφή α'

πηγαῖον ὥς νομίζεται

χέρνιβ' ἐπὶ φθιτῶν πύλαις, 100  
χαίτα τ' οὔτις ἐπὶ προθύροις  
τομαῖος, ἃ δὴ νεκύνων  
πένθει πίντει, οὐ νεολαία  
δουπεῖ χεῖρ γυναικῶν.

ΗΜ. καὶ μὴν τόδε κύριον ἡμαρ, 105

ΗΜ. τί τόδ' αὐδᾶς;

ΗΜ. ᾧ χρῆν σφε μολεῖν κατὰ γαίας.

ΗΜ. ἔθιγες ψυχᾶς, ἔθιγες δὲ φρενῶν.

ΗΜ. χρὴ τῶν ἀγαθῶν διακναιομένων  
πενθεῖν ὅστις 110

χρηστὸς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς νενόμισται.

ΧΟ. ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ναυκληρίαν 115

ἔσθ' ὅποι τις αἶας

στείλας ἢ Λυκίας

εἴτ' ἐπὶ τὰς ἀνύδρους 115

Ἀμμωνιάδας ἔδρας

δυστάνου παραλύσαι

ψυχάν· μόρος γὰρ ἀπότομος

πλάθει· θεῶν δ' ἐπ' ἐσχάrais

οὐκ ἔχω ἐπὶ τίνα 120

μηλοθύταν πορευθῶ.

μόνος δ' ἄν, εἰ φῶς τόδ' ἦν 125

ὄμμασιν δεδορκῶς

Φοίβου παῖς, προλιποῦς'

ἦλθεν ἔδρας σκοτίους 125

† Αἶδα τε πύλας·

δμαθέντας γὰρ ἀνίστη,

πρὶν αὐτὸν εἶλε διόβολον

πλᾶκτρον πυρὸς κεραυνίου.

νῦν δὲ τίς' ἔτι βίου 130

ἐλπίδα προσδέχωμαι;

στροφή β'

ἀντιστροφή β'

πάντα γὰρ ἤδη †τετέλεσται βασιλεύσω,  
 πάντων δὲ θεῶν ἐπὶ βωμοῖς  
 αἰμόρραντοι θυσίαι πλήρεις,  
 οὐδ' ἔστι κακῶν ἄκος οὐδέν.

135

## FIRST EPEISODION.

(A HANDMAID is seen approaching from the house.)

ἀλλ' ἦδ' ὀπαδῶν ἐκ δόμων τις ἔρχεται  
 δακρυρροοῦσα· τίνα τύχην ἀκούσομαι;  
 πενθεῖν μὲν, εἴ τι δεσπότησι τυγχάνει,  
 συγγνωστόν· εἰ δ' ἔτ' ἐστὶν ἔμψυχος γυνή  
 εἴτ' οὖν ὄλωλεν εἰδέναι βουλοίμεθ' ἄν.

140

## ΘΕΡΑΠΙΑΝΑ.

καὶ ζῶσαν εἰπεῖν καὶ θανοῦσαν ἔστι σοι.

ΧΟ. καὶ πῶς ἂν αὐτὸς κατθάνοι τε καὶ βλέποι;

ΘΕ. ἤδη προσηπὴς ἔστι καὶ ψυχορραγεῖ.

ΧΟ. ὦ τλήμον, οἷας οἶος ὦν ἁμαρτάνεις.

ΘΕ. οὐπω τόδ' οἶδε δεσπότης, πρὶν ἂν πάθῃ.

145

ΧΟ. ἐλπίς μὲν οὐκέτ' ἐστὶ σῶζεσθαι βίον;

ΘΕ. πεπρωμένη γὰρ ἡμέρα βιάζεται.

ΧΟ. οὐκ οὖν ἐπ' αὐτῇ πράσσεται τὰ πρόσφορα;

ΘΕ. κόσμος γ' ἔτοιμος, ὃ σφε συνθάψει πόσις.

ΧΟ. ἴστω νυν εὐκλεῆς γε κατθανουμένη

150

γυνή τ' ἀρίστη τῶν ὑφ' ἡλίῳ μακρῷ.

ΘΕ. πῶς δ' οὐκ ἀρίστη; τίς δ' ἐναντιώσεται;

τί χρὴ γενέσθαι τὴν ὑπερβεβλημένην

γυναῖκα; πῶς δ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἐνδείξαιτό τις

πόσιν προτιμῶσ' ἢ θέλουσ' ὑπερθανεῖν;

155

καὶ ταῦτα μὲν δὴ παρ' ἐπίσταται πόλις·

ἃ δ' ἐν δόμοις ἔδρασε θαυμάσει κλύων.



ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἤσθεθ' ἡμέραν τὴν κυρίαν  
 ἤκουσαν, ὑδάσι ποταμίοις λευκὸν χρῶα  
 ἐλούσατ', ἐκ δ' ἐλούσα κεδρίνων δόμων  
 ἐσθήτα κόσμον τ' εὐπρεπῶς ἡσκήσατο,  
 καὶ στασα πρόσθεν ἐστίας κατηύξατο,  
 δέσποιν', ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔρχομαι κατὰ χθονός,  
 πανύστατόν σε προσπίτνουσ' αἰτήσομαι,  
 τέκν' ὀρφανεύσαι τὰμά, καὶ τῷ μὲν φίλῃν  
 σύσσευξον ἄλοχον, τῇ δὲ γενναίου πόσιν.  
 μηδ' ὥσπερ αὐτῶν ἡ τεκοῦσ' ἀπόλλυμαι  
 θανεῖν ἄωρους παῖδας, ἀλλ' εὐδαίμονας  
 ἐν γῇ πατρώῳ τερπνὸν ἐκπλήσαι βίον.  
 πάντας δὲ βωμούς οἱ κατ' Ἀδμήτου δάμους  
 προσῆλθε κάζεστεψε καὶ προσῆύξατο,  
 πτόρθων ἀποσχίζουσα μυρσίνης φόβην,  
 ἄκλαυστος, ἀστένακτος, οὐδέ τοῦπιον  
 κακὸν μεθίστη χρωτὸς εὐειδῇ φύσιν.  
 κάπειτα θάλαμον ἐσπεσοῦσα καὶ λέχος,  
 ἐνταῦθα δὴ δάκρυσε καὶ λέγει τάδε,  
 ὦ λέκτρον, ἔνθα παρθένοι ἔλυσ' ἐγὼ  
 κορεύματ' ἐκ τοῦδ' ἀνδρός, οὐ θνήσκω πέρι,  
 χαῖρ'· οὐ γὰρ ἐχθαίρω σ'· ἀπώλεσας δέ με  
 μόρην· προδοῦναι γάρ σ' ὀκνοῦσα καὶ πόσιν  
 θνήσκω. σὲ δ' ἄλλη τις γυνὴ κεκτήσεται,  
 σώφρων μὲν οὐκ ἂν μᾶλλον, εὐτυχὴς δ' ἴσως.  
 κυνεῖ δὲ προσπίτνουσα, πᾶν δὲ δέμνιον  
 ὀφθαλμοτέγκτω δεύεται πλημμυρίδι.  
 ἐπεὶ δὲ πολλῶν δακρύων εἶχεν κόρον,  
 στείχει προῤῥωπῆς ἐκπεσοῦσα δέμνιον,  
 καὶ πολλὰ θάλαμον ἐξιούσ' ἐπεστράφη,  
 κάρριψεν αὐτὴν αὖθις ἐς κοίτην παλιν.  
 παῖδες δὲ πέπλων μητρὸς ἐξηρημένον

ἔκλαιον· ἡ δὲ λαμβάνουσ' ἐν ἀγκάλαις  
ἡσπάζετ' ἄλλοτ' ἄλλον, ὥς θανουμένη.

190

πάντες δ' ἔκλαιον οἰκέται κατὰ στέγας,  
δέσποιναν οἰκτεῖροντες. ἡ δὲ δεξίαν

προὔτειν' ἐκάστω, κοῦτις ἦν οὕτω κακός  
ὃν οὐ προσείπε καὶ προσερρήθη πάλιν.

195

τοιαῦτ' ἐν οἴκοις ἐστὶν Ἀδμήτου κακά.

καὶ κατθανών τ' ἂν ὦλετ', ἐκφυγών δ' ἔχει  
τοσαῦτον ἄλγος, οὐποθ' οὐ λεληθεῖται.

ΧΟ. ἡ πού στενάζει τοισὶδ' Ἀδμητος κακοῖς,  
ἐσθλῆς γυναικὸς εἰ στερηθῆναί σφε χρή;

200

ΘΕ. κλαίει γ', ἄκοιτιν ἐν χεροῖν φίλην ἔχων,  
καὶ μὴ προδοῦναι λίσσεται, τὰμῃχανα  
ζητῶν· φθίνει γὰρ καὶ μαραινεται νόσῳ.  
παρειμένη δέ, χειρὸς ἄθλιον βάρος

\* \* \* \* \*

ὅμως δὲ καίπερ σμικρὸν ἐμπνεύουσ' ἔτι  
βλέψαι πρὸς αὐγὰς βούλεται τὰς ἡλίου.

205

ἀλλ' εἶμι καὶ σὴν ἀγγελῶ παρουσίαν·

οὐ γάρ τι πάντες εὖ φρονοῦσι κοιράνοις,  
ὥστ' ἐν κακοῖσιν εὐμενεῖς παρεστάναι.

210

σὺ δ' εἰ παλαιὸς δεσπότης ἐμοῖς φίλος.

(Exit HANDMAID into the palace, leaving the stage empty.)

(The CHORUS divides into two sections, which afterwards unite.)

HM. ἰὼ Ζεῦ, τίς ἂν πῶς πόρος κακῶν  
γένοιτο καὶ λύσις τύχας ἃ πάρεστιν κοιράνοις;

HM. ἔξισί τις; ἡ τέμω τρίχα,  
καὶ μέλανα στολμὸν πέπλων ἀμφιβαλώμεθ' ἤδη;

215

207 ὥς οὐποτ' αὖθις, ἀλλὰ νῦν πανύστατον

208 ἀκτῖνα κύκλον θ' ἡλίου προσόψεται.

ΗΜ. δῆλα μέν, φίλοι, δῆλά γ', ἀλλ' ὅμως.  
θεοῖσιν εὐχόμεσθα· θεῶν γὰρ δύναμις μέγιστα.

ΧΟ. ὦναξ Παιάν,  
 ἔξευρε μηχανάν τιν' Ἀδμήτῳ κακῶν,  
 πόριξε δὴ πόριξε· καὶ πάρος γὰρ  
 †τοῦδ' ἐφεῦρες, καὶ νῦν  
 λυτήριος ἐκ θανάτου γενοῦ,  
 φόνιόν τ' ἀπόπανσον Ἄιδαν.

HM. παπαὶ φεῦ παπαὶ φεῦ ἰὼ ἰώ. ἀντιστροφή  
ὦ παὶ Φέρητος, οἳ ἔπραξας δάμαρτος σῶς στερεῖς.

ΗΜ. ἀρ' ἄξια καὶ σφαγᾶς τάδε,  
καὶ πλέον ἢ βρόχῳ δέρην οὐρανίῳ πελάσσαι; 230

ΗΜ. τὰν γὰρ οὐ φίλαν, ἀλλὰ φιλτάταν  
 γυναιῖκα καθθανοῦσαν εἰν ἡματι τῷδ' ἐπόψει.

ΧΟ. ἰδὸν ἰδου,  
 ἦδ' ἐκ δόμων δὴ καὶ πόσις πορεύεται.  
 βόασον ὦ, στέναξον ὦ Φεραία  
 χθών, τὰν ἀρίστην  
 γυναιῖκα μαραινομένην νόσφ'  
 κατὰ γᾶς, χθόνιον παρ' Αἶδαν.  
 οὔποτε φήσω γάμον εὐφραίνειν  
 πλέον ἢ λυπεῖν, τοῖς τε πάροιθεν  
 τεκμαιρόμενος καὶ τάσδε τύχας  
 λεύσσω βασιλέως, ὅστις ἀρίστης  
 ἀπλακὼν ἀλόχου τῇσδ' ἀβίωτον  
 τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον βιοτεύσει.

(ALCESTIS is carried forth from the palace: ADMETUS attending her and her two children, EUMELUS and a girl.)

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ.

Ἄλῃ καὶ φάος ἡμέρας, strophi a'  
οὐραναὶ τε δῖναι νεφέλας δρομαίων. 245

## ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ.

- ὁρᾷ σε κάμει, δύο κακῶς πεπραγότας,  
 οὐδὲν θεοὺς δράσαντας ἀνθ' ὅτου θανεῖ.
- ΑΔ. γαῖά τε καὶ μελάρων στέγαι ἀντιστροφή α'  
 νυμφίδιοι, τε κοῖται πατρῶας Ἰωλκῶ.
- ΑΔ. ἐπαίρει ταύτην, ὦ τάλαινα, μὴ προδῶς· Χ 250  
 λίσσου δὲ τοὺς κρατοῦντας οἰκτεῖραι θεοὺς.
- ΑΔ. ὁρῶ δίκωπον ὁρῶ σκάφος, νεκύων δὲ πορθμεὺς  
 στροφή β'  
 ἔχων χέρ' ἐπὶ κοντῷ Χάρων [μ' ἤδη] καλεῖ· τί  
 μέλλεις;  
 ἐπείγουν· σὺ κατείργεις. τάδε τοί με σπερχόμενος  
 ταχύνει. 256
- ΑΔ. οἴμοι· πικράν γε τήνδε μοι ναυκληρίαν  
 ἔλεξας. ὦ δύσδαιμον, οἷα πάσχομεν.
- ΑΔ. ἄγει μ' ἄγει μέ τις, οὐχ ὁρᾷς; νεκύων ἐς αὐλὰν  
 ἀντιστροφή β'  
 ὑπ' ὀφρύσι κυαναυγέσι βλέπων πτερωτὸς Ἄιδας.  
 τί ρέξεις; ἄφες. οἷαν ὁδὸν ἂ δειλαιοτάτα προ-  
 βαίνω.
- ΑΔ. οἰκτρὰν φίλοισιν, ἐκ δὲ τῶν μάλιστ' ἐμοὶ  
 καὶ παισίν, οἷς δὴ πένθος ἐν κοινῷ τόδε. 265
- ΑΔ. μέθετε μέθετέ μ' ἤδη. ἐπωδός  
 κλίνατ', οὐ σθένω ποσί.  
 πλησίον Ἄιδας·  
 σκοτία δ' ἐπ' ὅσσοις νύξ ἐφέρειπει.  
 τέκνα τέκν', οὐκέτι δὴ οὐκέτι μάτηρ σφῶν ἔστιν.  
 χαίροντες, ὦ τέκνα, τόδε φάος ὀρῶτον. 271
- ΑΔ. οἴμοι· τόδ' ἔπος λυπρὸν ἀκούω  
 καὶ παντὸς ἐμοὶ θανάτου μεῖζον.  
 μὴ πρὸς σε θεῶν τλῆς με προδοῦναι, 275

μὴ πρὸς παίδων, οὓς ὀρφανιεῖς,  
ἀλλ' ἄνα τόλμα·

σοῦ γὰρ φθιμένης οὐκέτ' ἂν εἶην·  
ἐν σοὶ δ' ἐσμεν καὶ ζῆν καὶ μῆ·  
σὴν γὰρ φιλίαν σεβόμεσθα.

- ΑΛ. "Αδμηθ', ὀρᾷς γὰρ τὰμὰ πράγμαθ' ὥς ἔχει, 280  
λέξαι. θέλω σοι πρὶν θανεῖν ἂ βούλομαι.  
ἐγὼ σε πρεσβεύουσα κἀντὶ τῆς ἐμῆς  
ψυχῆς καταστήσασα φῶς τόδ' εἰσορᾶν,  
θνήσκω, παρόν μοι μὴ θανεῖν ὑπὲρ σέθεν,  
ἀλλ' ἄνδρα τε σχεῖν Θεσσαλῶν ὃν ἤθελον, 285  
καὶ δῶμα ναίειν ὄλβιον τυραννίδι,  
οὐκ ἠθέλησα ζῆν ἀποσπασθεῖσά σου  
σὺν παισὶν ὀρφανοῖσιν· οὐδ' ἐφεισάμην  
ἧβης ἔχουσα δῶρ', ἐν οἷς ἐτερπόμην.  
καίτοι σ' ὁ φύσας χῆ τεκοῖσα προὔδοσαν, 290  
καλῶς μὲν αὐτοῖς κατθανεῖν ἦκον βίου,  
καλῶς δὲ σῶσαι παῖδα κεύκλεως θανεῖν.  
μόνος γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἦσθα, κοῦτις ἐλπὶς ἦν  
σοῦ κατθανόντος ἄλλα φιτύσειν τέκνα.  
κἀγὼ τ' ἂν ἔζων καὶ σὺ τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον, 295  
κοῦκ ἂν μονωθεὶς σῆς δάμαρτος ἔστενες,  
καὶ παῖδας ὠρφάνευες. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν  
θεῶν τις ἐξέπραξεν ὥσθ' οὕτως ἔχειν.  
εἶεν· σύ νῦν μοι τῶνδ' ἀπόμνησαι χάριν·  
αἰτήσομαι γάρ σ' ἀξίαν μὲν οὐποτε· 300  
ψυχῆς γὰρ οὐδέν ἐστι τιμιώτερον·  
δίκαια δ', ὥς φήσεις σύ· τοῦσδε γὰρ φιλεῖς  
οὐχ ἦσσον ἢ 'γὰ παῖδας, εἴπερ εὖ φρονεῖς·  
τούτους ἀνάσχου δεσπότης ἐμῶν δόμων,  
καὶ μὴ 'πιγῆμης τοῖσδε μητρυιὰν τέκνοις, 305  
ἦτις κακίων οὖσ' ἐμοῦ γυνὴ φθόνῳ

τοῖς σοῖσι κάμοις παισὶ χεῖρα προσβαλεῖ.  
 μὴ δῆτα δράσης ταῦτά γ', αἰτοῦμαί σ' ἐγώ.  
 ἐχθρὰ γὰρ ἢ ἑπιούσα μητρὶα τέκνοις  
 τοῖς πρόσθ', ἐχλιδνῆς οὐδὲν ἠπιωτέρα. 310

καὶ παῖς μὲν ἄρσην πατέρ' ἔχει πύργον μέγαν,  
 σὺ δ' ὦ τέκνον μοι πῶς κορευθήσῃ καλῶς ;  
 ποίας τυχοῦσα συζύγου τῷ σῷ πατρί ;  
 μή σοί τιw' αἰσχροῦ προσβαλοῦσα κληδόνα 315

ἤβῃς ἐν ἀκμῇ σοὺς διαφθείρῃ γάμους.  
 οὐ γάρ σε μήτηρ οὔτε νυμφεύσει ποτὲ  
 οὔτ' ἐν τόκοισι τοῖσι σοῖσι θαρσυνεῖ  
 παροῦσ', ἵν' οὐδὲν μητρὸς εὐμενέστερον.

δεῖ γὰρ θανεῖν με· καὶ τόδ' οὐκ εἰς αὔριον 320  
 οὐδ' ἐς τρίτην μοι † μηνὸς ἔρχεται κακόν,  
 ἀλλ' αὐτίκ' ἐν τοῖς μηκέτ' οὔσι λέξομαι.

χαίροντες εὐφραίνοισθε· καὶ σοὶ μὲν, πόσι,  
 γυναικ' ἀρίστην ἔστι κομπάσαι λαβεῖν,  
 ὑμῖν δέ, παῖδες, μητρὸς ἐκπεφυκέναι. 325

ΧΟ. θάρσει· πρὸ τούτου γὰρ λέγειν οὐχ ἄξομαι·  
 ὀράσει τάδ', εἴπερ μὴ φρενῶν ἀμαρτάνει.

ΑΔ. ἔσται τάδ' ἔσται, μὴ τρέσης· ἐπεὶ σ' ἐγὼ  
 καὶ ζῶσαν εἶχον καὶ θανοῦσ' ἐμὴ γυνή·  
 μόνη κεκλήσει, κοῦτις ἀντὶ σοῦ ποτὲ 330

τόνδ' ἄνδρα νύμφῃ Θεσσαλὶς προσφθέγγεται·  
 οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως οὔτε πατρὸς εὐγενοῦς  
 οὔτ' εἶδος ἄλλως ἐκπρεπεστάτῃ γυνή.

ἄλλῃ δὲ παίδων. τῶνδ' ὄνησιν εὐχομαι  
 θεοῖς γενέσθαι· σοῦ γὰρ οὐκ ὠνήμεθα. 335

οἶσω δὲ πένθος οὐκ ἐτήσιον τὸ σόν,  
 ἀλλ' ἔς τ' ἂν αἰῶν οὐμὸς ἀντέχῃ, γύναι,  
 στυγῶν μὲν ἢ μ' ἔτικτεν, ἐχθαίρων δ' ἐμὸν

πατέρα· λόγῳ γὰρ ἦσαν οὐκ ἔργῳ φίλοι.  
 σὺ δ' ἀντιδοῦσα τῆς ἐμῆς τὰ φίλτατα 340  
 ψυχῆς ἔσωσας. ἄρά μοι στένειν πάρα  
 τοιᾶσδ' ἁμαρτάνοντι συζύγου σέθεν;  
 παύσω δὲ κώμους συμποτῶν θ' ὁμιλίας  
 στεφάνους τε μοῦσάν θ', ἣ κατεῖχ' ἐμοὺς δόμους.  
 οὐ γάρ ποτ' οὔτ' ἂν βαρβίτου θίγοιμ' ἔτι 345  
 οὔτ' ἂν φρέν' ἐξαίροιμι πρὸς Λίβυν λακείν  
 αὐλόν· σὺ γάρ μου τέρψιν ἐξείλου βίου.  
 σοφῇ δὲ χειρὶ τεκτόνων δέμας τὸ σὸν  
 εἰκασθὲν ἐν λέκτροισιν ἐκταθήσεται,  
 ᾧ προσπεσοῦμαι καὶ περιπτύσσων χέρας 350  
 ὄνομα καλῶν σὸν τὴν φίλην ἐν ἀγκάλαις  
 δόξω γυναῖκα καίπερ οὐκ ἔχων ἔχειν,  
 ψυχρὰν μέν, οἶμαι, τέρψιν, ἀλλ' ὅμως βάρος  
 ψυχῆς ἀπαντλοῖν ἂν· ἐν δ' ὀνείρασι  
 φοιτῶσά μ' εὐφραίνοις ἂν. ἡδὺ γὰρ φίλους 355  
 κὰν νυκτὶ λεύσσειν, ὄντιν' ἂν παρῇ χρόνον.  
 εἰ δ' Ὀρφέως μοι γλῶσσα καὶ μέλος παρῇν,  
 ὥστ' ἡ κόρην Δήμητρος ἡ κείνης πόσιν  
 ὕμνοισι κηλήσαντά σ' ἐξ Ἀιδου λαβεῖν,  
 κατῆλθον ἂν, καί μ' οὔθ' ὁ Πλούτωνος κύων 360  
 οὔθ' οὐπὶ κώπῃ ψυχοπομπὸς ἂν Χάρων  
 ἔσχον, πρὶν ἐς φῶς σὸν καταστήσαι βίου  
 ἀλλ' οὖν ἐκείσε προσδόκα μ', ὅταν θάνω,  
 καὶ δῶμ' ἐτοίμαζ', ὥς συνοικήσουσά μοι.  
 ἐν ταῖσιν αὐταῖς γάρ μ' ἐπισκῆψω κέδροις 365  
 σοὶ τούσδε θεῖναι πλευρά τ' ἐκτεῖναι πέλας  
 πλευροῖσι τοῖς σοῖς· μηδὲ γὰρ θανῶν ποτε  
 σοῦ χωρὶς εἶην τῆς μόνης πιστῆς ἐμοί·  
 ΧΟ. καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ σοι πένθος ὥς φίλος φίλῳ  
 λυπρὸν συνοίσω τῇσδε· καὶ γὰρ ἄξία. 370



- ΑΛ. ὦ παῖδες, αὐτοὶ δὴ τὰδ' εἰσηκούσατε  
πατὴρ δὲ λέγοντος μὴ γαμεῖν ἄλλην ποτὲ  
γυναικ' ἐφ' ὑμῖν, μηδ' ἀτιμάσειν ἐμέ.
- ΑΔ. καὶ νῦν γέ φημι, καὶ τελευτήσω τὰδε.
- ΑΛ. ἐπὶ τοῖσδε παῖδας χειρὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς δέχου. 375
- ΑΔ. δέχομαι, φίλον γε δῶρον ἐκ φίλης χερὸς.
- ΑΛ. σὺ νῦν γενοῦ τοῖσδ' ἀντ' ἐμοῦ μήτηρ τέκνοις.
- ΑΔ. πολλή γ' ἀνάγκη σοῦ γ' ἀπεστερημένοις.
- ΑΛ. ὦ τέκν', ὅτε ζῆν χρῆν μ', ἀπέρχομαι κάτω.
- ΑΔ. οἶμοι, τί δράσω δῆτα σοῦ μονούμενος; 380
- ΑΛ. χρόνος μαλάξει σ'. οὐδέν ἐσθ' ὁ κατθανών.
- ΑΔ. ἄγου με σὺν σοι πρὸς θεῶν ἄγου κάτω.
- ΑΛ. ἀρκοῦμεν ἡμεῖς οἱ προθυήσκοντες σέθεν.
- ΑΔ. ὦ δαῖμον, οἷας συζύγου μ' ἀποστερεῖς.
- ΑΛ. καὶ μὴν σκοτεινὸν ὄμμα μου βαρύνεται. 385
- ΑΔ. ἀπωλόμην ἄρ', εἴ με δὴ λείψεις, γύναι.
- ΑΛ. ὥς οὐκέτ' οὔσαν οὐδὲν ἂν λέγοις ἐμέ.
- ΑΔ. ὄρθου πρόσωπον, μὴ λίπης παῖδας σέθεν.
- ΑΛ. οὐ δῆθ' ἐκοῦσά γ', ἀλλὰ χαίρειτ', ὦ τέκνα.
- ΑΔ. βλέψον πρὸς αὐτοὺς βλέψον.
- ΑΛ. οὐδέν εἰμ' ἔτι. 390
- ΑΔ. τί δρᾷς; προλείπεις;
- ΑΛ. χαῖρ'.
- ΑΔ. ἀπωλόμην τάλας.
- ΧΟ. βέβηκεν, οὐκέτ' ἔστιν Ἀδμήτου γυνή.  
(ALCESTIS dies.)

## ΕΥΜΗΛΟΣ.

(Clinging to the corpse.)

- ἰὼ μοι τύχας. μαῖα δὴ κάτω 395
- βέβακεν, οὐκέτ' ἔστιν, ὦ
- πάτερ, ὑφ' ἀλίῳ.

στροφή

προλιποῦσα δ' ἄμὸν βίου

ῥομφάνισεν τλάμων.

ἴδε γὰρ ἴδε βλέφαρον

καὶ παρατόνους χέρας.

ὑπάκουσον, ἄκουσον, ὦ μήτερ, ἀντιάζω σ'

400

ἐγὼ μήτερ, ἐγώ,

\* \* καλοῦμαί σ' ὁ

σὸς ποτὶ σοῖσι πίτνων στόμασιν νεοσσός.

ΑΔ. τήν γ' οὐ κλύουσαν οὐδ' ὀρώσαν· ὥστ' ἐγὼ

καὶ σφῶν βαρεῖα συμφορὰ πεπλήγμεθα.

405

ΕΥ. νέος ἐγώ, πάτερ, λείπομαι φίλας

ἀντιστροφή

μονόστολός τε ματρός· ὦ

σχέτλια δὴ παθῶν

ἐγὼ ἔργα \* σύ τε,

σύγκασί μοι κούρα,

410

\* \* συνέτλας·

\* \* ὦ πάτερ,

ἀνόνατ' ἀνόνατ' ἐνύμφευσας, οὐδὲ γήρως

ἔβας τέλος σὺν τᾷδ'.

ἔφθιτο γὰρ πάρος,

οἰχομένας δὲ σοῦ, μήτερ, ὄλωλεν οἶκος.

415

ΧΟ. Ἄδμητ', ἀνάγκη τάσδε συμφορὰς φέρειν·

οὐ γάρ τι πρῶτος οὐδὲ λοίσθιος βροτῶν

γυναικὸς ἐσθλῆς ἤμπλακες· γίγνωσκε δὲ

ὥς πᾶσιν ἡμῖν κατθανεῖν ὀφείλεται.

ΑΔ. ἐπίσταμαί τε κοῦκ ἄφνω κακὸν τόδε

420

προσέπτατ'· εἰδὼς δ' αὖτ' ἔτειρόμην πάλαι.

ἄλλ' ἐκφορὰν γὰρ τοῦδε θήσομαι νεκροῦ,

πάρεστε καὶ μένοντες ἀντηχήσατε

παιᾶνα τῷ κάτωθεν ἀσπόνδῳ θεῷ.

πᾶσιν δὲ Θεσσαλοῖσιν ὦν ἐγὼ κρατῶ

425

πένθους γυναικὸς τῇσδε κοινοῦσθαι λέγω

κουρᾷ ξυρήκει καὶ μελαγχίμοις πέπλοις·  
 τέθριππά θ' οἱ ζεύγνυσθε καὶ μονάμπυκας  
 πώλους, σιδήρῳ τέμνεται ἀνχένων φόβην.  
 αὐλῶν δὲ μὴ κατ' ἄστνυ, μὴ λύρας κτύπος 430  
 ἔστω σελήνας δώδεκ' ἐκπληρουμένας·  
 οὐ γάρ τιν' ἄλλον φίλτερον θάψω νεκρὸν  
 τοῦδ' οὐδ' ἀμείνον' εἰς ἔμ'. ἀξία δέ μοι  
 τιμᾶν, ἐπεὶ τέθνηκεν αὐτ' ἐμοῦ μόνη.

(The corpse is now carried into the palace. With it go  
 ADMETUS, EUMELUS, and the GIRL, leaving the stage  
 empty.)

### FIRST STASIMON.

#### ΧΟΡΟΣ.

ὦ Πελίου θύγατερ, στροφή α'  
 χαίρουσά μοι εἶν' Ἀΐδα δόμοισιν 436  
 τὸν ἀνάλιον οἶκον οἰκετεύοις.  
 ἴστω δ' Ἀΐδας ὁ μελαγχαίτας θεός, ὅς τ' ἐπὶ κώπα  
 πηδάλῳ τε γέρων 440  
 νεκροπομπὸς ἵζει,  
 πολὺ δὴ πολὺ δὴ γυναῖκ' ἀρίσταν  
 λίμναν Ἀχεροντίαν πορεύσας ἐλάτῃ δικώπῳ.  
 πολλά σε μουνσοπόλοι ἀντιστροφή α'  
 μέλψουσι καθ' ἐπτάτονόν τ' ὀρεῖαν 446  
 χέλυν ἔν τ' ἀλύροις κλέοντες ὕμνοις,  
 Σπάρτα κυκλᾶς ἀνίκα Καρνείου περυνίσσεται ὦρα  
 μηνὸς ἀειρομένας 450  
 παννύχου σελάνας,  
 λιπαραιῖσί τ' ἐν ὀλβίαις Ἀθάναις.  
 τοίαν ἔλιπες θανοῦσα μολπὰν μελέων ἀοιδοῖς.  
 εἴθ' ἐπ' ἐμοὶ μὲν εἴη, στροφή β'  
 δυναίμαν δέ σε πέμψαι 456

φάος ἐξ Ἀΐδα τεράμνων  
 Κωκυτοῦ τε ῥεέθρων  
 ποταμῖα νερέερα τε κώπα.  
 σὺ γάρ, ὦ μόνα, ὦ φίλα γυναικῶν, 460  
 σὺ τὸν αὐτὰς  
 ἔτλας πόσιν ἀντὶ σᾶς ἀμείψαι  
 ψυχᾶς ἐξ Ἀΐδα. κούφα σοι  
 χθὼν ἐπάνωθε πέσοι, γύναι. εἰ δέ τι  
 καινὸν ἔλοιτο λέχος πόσις, ἧ μάλ' ἔμοιγ' ἂν εἴη  
 στυγηθεὶς τέκνοις τε τοῖς σοῖς. 465  
 ματέρος οὐ θελούσας ἀντιστροφὴ β'  
 πρὸ παιδὸς χθονὶ κρύψαι  
 δέμας, οὐδὲ πατρὸς γεραιοῦ,

\* \* \* \* \*

ὃν ἔτεκον δ', οὐκ ἔτλαν ῥύεσθαι  
 σχετλίῳ, πολιὰν ἔχοντε χαίταν. 470  
 σὺ δ' ἐν ἧβα  
 νέα προθανοῦσα φωτὸς οἶχει.  
 τοιαύτας εἴη μοι κῆρσαι  
 συνδνάδος φιλίας ἀλόχον· τὸ γὰρ  
 ἐν βιότῳ σπάνιον μέρος· ἧ γὰρ ἔμοιγ' ἄλυπος  
 δι' αἰῶνος ἂν ξυνείη. 475

## SECOND EPEISODION.

(Enter HERACLES as from the country.)

### ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ.

ξένοι, Φεραίᾳς τῇσδε κωμῆται χθονός,  
 Ἄδμητον ἐν δόμοισιν ἄρα κιγχάνω;

ΧΟ. ἔστ' ἐν δόμοισι παῖς φέρητος, Ἡράκλειδ.  
 ἀλλ' εἰπὲ χρεῖα τίς σε Θεσσαλῶν χθόνα  
 πέμπει, Φεραίων ἄστν προσβῆναι τόδε. 480

- ΗΡ. Τιρυνθίῳ πρᾶσσω τιν' Εὐρυσθεὶ πόνον.  
 ΧΟ. καὶ ποῖ πορεύει; τῷ προσέξενξαι πλάνῳ;  
 ΗΡ. Θρηκὸς τέτρωρον ἄρμα Διομήδους μέτα.  
 ΧΟ. πῶς οὖν δυνήσκει; μὼν ἄπειρος εἶ ξένου;  
 ΗΡ. ἄπειρος· οὐπω Βιστόνων ἦλθον χθόνα. 485  
 ΧΟ. οὐκ ἔστιν ἵππων δεσπόσαι σ' ἄνευ μάχης.  
 ΗΡ. ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἀπειπεῖν τοὺς πόνους οἶόν τέ μοι.  
 ΧΟ. κτανὼν ἄρ' ἤξεις ἢ θανὼν αὐτοῦ μενεῖς.  
 ΗΡ. οὐ τόνδ' ἀγῶνα πρῶτον ἂν δράμοιμ' ἐγώ.  
 ΧΟ. τί δ' ἂν κρατήσας δεσπότην πλέον λάβοις; 490  
 ΗΡ. πῶλους ἀπάξω κοιράνῳ Τιρυνθίῳ.  
 ΧΟ. οὐκ εὐμαρὲς χαλινὸν ἐμβαλεῖν γνώθοις.  
 ΗΡ. εἰ μή γε πῦρ πνέουσι μυκτῆρων ἄπο.  
 ΧΟ. ἀλλ' ἄνδρας ἀρταμοῦσι λαιψηραῖς γνώθοις.  
 ΗΡ. θηρῶν ὀρείων χόρτον, οὐχ ἵππων, λέγεις. 495  
 ΧΟ. φάτνας ἴδοις ἂν αἵμασιν πεφυρμένας.  
 ΗΡ. τίνος δ' ὁ θρέψας παῖς πατρὸς κομπάζεται;  
 ΧΟ. Ἄρεως, ζαχρύσου Θρηκίας πέλτης ἄναξ.  
 ΗΡ. καὶ τόνδε τοῦμοῦ δαίμονος πόνον λέγεις,  
 σκληρὸς γὰρ αἰεὶ καὶ πρὸς αἵπος ἔρχεται, 500  
 εἰ χρή με παισὶν οὖς Ἄρης ἐγείνατο  
 μάχην συνάψαι, πρῶτα μὲν Λυκάονι,  
 αὐθις δὲ Κύκνῳ, τόνδε δ' ἔρχομαι τρίτον  
 ἀγῶνα πῶλοις δεσπότη τε συμβαλῶν.  
 ἀλλ' οὐτις ἔστιν ὃς τὸν Ἀλκμήνης γόνον 505  
 τρέσαντα χεῖρα πολεμίων ποτ' ὄψεται.

(Enter ADMETUS from the palace.)

- ΧΟ. καὶ μὴν ὃδ' αὐτὸς τῇσδε κοίρανος χθονὸς  
 Ἄδμητος ἔξω δωμάτων πορεύεται.  
 ΑΔ. χαῖρ', ὦ Διὸς παῖ Περσέως τ' ἀφ' αἵματος.  
 ΗΡ. Ἄδμητε, καὶ σὺ χαῖρε, Θεσσαλῶν ἄναξ. 510

- ΑΔ. θέλοιμ' ἄν· εὐνουν δ' ὄντα σ' ἐξεπίσταμαι.  
 ΗΡ. τί χρῆμα κουρά τῇδε πενθίμῳ πρόπεις ;  
 ΑΔ. θάπτειν τιν' ἐν τῇδ' ἡμέρᾳ μέλλω νεκρόν.  
 ΗΡ. ἀπ' οὖν τέκνων σὼν πημουνην εἶργοι θεός.  
 ΑΔ. ζῶσιν κατ' οἴκους παῖδες οὓς ἔφυσ' ἐγώ. 515  
 ΗΡ. πατήρ γε μὴν ὥραϊος, εἶπερ οἴχεται.  
 ΑΔ. κάκεινος ἔστι χῆ τεκοῦσά μ', Ἡράκλεις.  
 ΗΡ. οὐ μὴν γυνή γ' ὄλωλεν Ἄλκηστις σέθεν ;  
 ΑΔ. διπλοῦς ἐπ' αὐτῇ μῦθος ἔστι μοι λέγειν.  
 ΗΡ. πότερα θανούσης εἶπας ἢ ζώσης πέρι ; 520  
 ΑΔ. ἔστιν τε κούκέτ' ἔστιν, ἀलगύνει δέ με.  
 ΗΡ. οὐδέν τι μάλλον οἶδ'· ἄσημα γὰρ λέγεις.  
 ΑΔ. οὐκ οἶσθα μοίρας ἧς τυχεῖν αὐτὴν χρεών ;  
 ΗΡ. οἶδ' ἀντὶ σοῦ γε κατθανεῖν ὑφειμένην.  
 ΑΔ. πῶς οὖν ἔτ' ἔστιν, εἶπερ ἦνεσεν τάδε ; 525  
 ΗΡ. ἂ, μὴ πρόκλαι' ἄκοιτιν, ἐς τόδ' ἀναβαλοῦ.  
 ΑΔ. τέθνηχ' ὁ μέλλων, κούκέτ' ἔσθ' ὁ κατθανών.  
 ΗΡ. χωρὶς τό τ' εἶναι καὶ τὸ μὴ νομίζεται.  
 ΑΔ. σὺ τῇδε κρίνεις, Ἡράκλεις, κείνη δ' ἐγώ.  
 ΗΡ. τί δῆτα κλαίεις ; τίς φίλων ὁ κατθανών ; 530  
 ΑΔ. γυνή· γυναικὸς ἀρτίως μεμνήμεθα.  
 ΗΡ. ὀθνεῖος, ἣ σοὶ συγγενῆς γεγῶσά τις ;  
 ΑΔ. ὀθνεῖος, ἄλλως δ' ἦν ἀναγκαία δόμοις.  
 ΗΡ. πῶς οὖν ἐν οἴκοις σοῖσιν ὤλεσεν βίον ;  
 ΑΔ. πατρὸς θανόντος ἐνθάδ' ὠρφανεύετο. 535  
 ΗΡ. φεῦ.  
 εἴθ' εὖρομέν σ', Ἄδμητε, μὴ λυπούμενον.  
 ΑΔ. ὥς δὴ τί δράσων τόνδ' ὑπορράπτεις λόγον ;  
 ΗΡ. ξένων πρὸς ἄλλην ἐστίαν πορεύσομαι.  
 ΑΔ. οὐκ ἔστιν, ὦναξ· μὴ τοσόνδ' ἔλθοι κακόν.  
 ΗΡ. λυπουμένοις ὀχληρὸς, εἰ μόλοι, ξένος. 540  
 ΑΔ. τεθνᾶσιw οἱ θανόντες· ἀλλ' ἴθ' ἐς δόμους.

- ΗΡ. αἰσχροὺν παρὰ κλαίουσι θοινᾶσθαι φίλοις.  
 ΑΔ. χωρὶς ξενῶνές εἰσιν οἱ σ' εἰσάξομεν.  
 ΗΡ. μέθες με, καὶ σοι μυρίαν ἔξω χάριν.  
 ΑΔ. οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλου σ' ἀνδρὸς ἐστίαν μολεῖν. 545  
 ἡγοῦ σύ, τῶνδε δωμάτων ἐξωπίους  
 ξενῶνας οἷξας, τοῖς τ' ἐφeskτῶσι φράσον  
 σίτων παρῆναι πλῆθος· ἐν δὲ κλήσατε  
 θύρας μεσαύλους· οὐ πρέπει θοινωμένους  
 κλύειν στεναγμῶν οὐδὲ λυπεῖσθαι ξένους. 550

(Exit HERACLES, led by an attendant into the palace.)

- ΧΟ. τί δρᾶς; τοσαύτης συμφορᾶς προσκειμένης,  
 Ἄδμητε, τολμᾶς ξενοδοχεῖν; τί μῶρος εἶ;  
 ΑΔ. ἀλλ' εἰ δόμων σφε καὶ πόλεως ἀπήλασα  
 ξένον μολόντα, μᾶλλον ἂν μ' ἐπήνεσας;  
 οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ μοι συμφορὰ μὲν οὐδὲν ἂν 555  
 μείων ἐγίγνεται, ἀξενώτερος δ' ἐγώ.  
 καὶ πρὸς κακοῖσιν ἄλλο τοῦτ' ἂν ἦν κακόν,  
 δόμους καλεῖσθαι τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἐχθροξένους.  
 αὐτὸς δ' ἀρίστου τοῦδε τυγχάνω ξένου,  
 ὅταν περ Ἄργους διψίαν ἔλθω χθόνα. 560  
 ΧΟ. πῶς οὖν ἔκρυπτες τὸν παρόντα δαίμονα,  
 φίλου μολόντος ἀνδρός, ὥς αὐτὸς λέγεις;  
 ΑΔ. οὐκ ἂν ποτ' ἠθέλησεν εἰσελθεῖν δόμους,  
 εἰ τῶν ἐμῶν τι πημάτων ἐγνώρισε.  
 καὶ τῷ μὲν, οἶμαι, δρῶν τὰδ' οὐ φρονεῖν δοκῶ, 565  
 οὐδ' αἰνέσει με· τὰμὰ δ' οὐκ ἐπίσταται  
 μέλαθρ' ἀπωθεῖν οὐδ' ἀτιμάζειν ξένους.

(Exit ADMETUS into the palace, leaving the stage empty.)



## SECOND STASIMON.

## ΧΟΡΟΣ.

[στροφή α'

ὦ πολύξεινος καὶ ἐλευθέρου ἀνδρὸς αἰεί ποτ' οἶκος,  
σέ τοι καὶ ὁ Πύθιος εὐλύρας Ἀπόλλων 570

ἤξιωσε ναίειν,

ἔτλα δὲ σοῖσι μηλονόμας

ἐν δόμοις γενέσθαι,

δοχμῶν διὰ κλιτύων 575

βοσκήμασι σοῖσι συρίζων

ποιμνίτας ὑμεναίους.

[ἀντιστροφή α'

σὺν δ' ἐποιμαίνοντο χαρᾷ μελέων βαλῖαι τε  
λύγκες,

ἔβα δὲ λιποῦσ' Ὀθρυος νάπαν λεόντων 580

ἃ δαφνωδὲς ἴλα·

χόρευσε δ' ἀμφὶ σὰν κιθάραν,

Φοῖβε, ποικιλόθριξ

νεβρὸς ὑψικόμων πέραν 585

βαίνουσ' ἐλατᾶν σφυρῷ κούφῳ,

χαίρουσ' εὐφροني μολπᾷ.

τοιγὰρ πολυμηλοτάταν

στροφή β'

ἐστῖαν οἰκεί παρὰ καλλίναον

Βοιβίαν λίμναν· ἀρότοις δὲ γυνᾶν 590

καὶ πεδίων δαπέδοις ὄρον ἀμφὶ μὲν ἀελίου  
κνεφαίαν

ἱππόστασιν αἰθέρα τὰν Μολοσσῶν τίθεται,

πόντιον δ' Αἰγαίων' ἐπ' ἀκτὰν 595

ἀλίμενον Πηλίου κρατύνει.

καὶ νῦν δόμον ἀμπετάσας

ἀντιστροφή β'

δέξατο ξείνον νοτερῷ βλεφάρῳ,

τᾶς φίλας κλαίων ἀλόχου νέκυν ἐν

δῶμασιν ἀρτιθανῆ· τὸ γὰρ εὐγενὲς ἐκφέρεται πρὸς αἰδῶ.

ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖσι δὲ πάντ' ἔνεστιν σοφίας.

πρὸς δ' ἐμᾶ ψυχᾷ θάρσος ἦσται

θεοσεβῇ φῶτα κεδνὰ πράξειν.

605

### THIRD EPEISODION.

(*The corpse of ALCESTIS is carried out of the palace. ADMETUS comes forth with it; a train is formed to accompany the corpse to the pyre.*)

ΑΔ. ἀνδρῶν Φεραίων εὐμενῆς παρουσία,  
νέκυν μὲν ἤδη πάντ' ἔχοντα πρόσπολοι  
φέρουσιν ἄρδην ἐς τάφον τε καὶ πυράν·  
ὕμεῖς δὲ τὴν θανοῦσαν, ὡς νομίζεται,  
προσείπατ' ἐξιούσαν ὑστάτην ὁδόν.

610

ΧΟ. καὶ μὴν ὄρῳ σὸν πατέρα γηραῖῳ ποδὶ  
στείχοντ', ὁπαδούς τ' ἐν χεροῖν δάμαρτι σῇ  
κόσμον φέροντας, νερτέρων ἀγάλματα.

(*Enter PHERES to join the funeral train.*)

### ΦΕΡΗΣ.

ἦκω κακοῖσι σοῖσι συγκάμνων, τέκνον·  
ἐσθλῆς γάρ, οὐδεὶς ἀντερεῖ, καὶ σῶφρονος  
γυναικὸς ἡμάρτηκας· ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν  
φέρειν ἀνάγκη, καίπερ ὄντα δύσφορα.  
δέχου δὲ κόσμον τόνδε, καὶ κατὰ χθονὸς  
ἵτω· τὸ ταύτης σῶμα τιμᾶσθαι χρεών,  
ἥτις γε τῆς σῆς προὔθανε ψυχῆς, τέκνον,  
καί μ' οὐκ ἄπαιδ' ἔθηκεν, οὐδ' εἴασε σοῦ  
στερέντα γήρα πενθίμῳ καταφθίνειν,  
πάσαις δ' ἔθηκεν εὐκλεέστατον βίον  
γυναιξίν, ἔργον τλᾶσα γενναῖον τόδε.

615

620

ὦ τόνδε μὲν σώσασ', ἀναστήσασα δὲ  
 ἡμᾶς πίνοντας, χαῖρε κὰν Ἑλίου δόμοις.  
 εὖ σοι γένοιτο· φημὶ τοιούτους γάμους  
 λύειν βροτοῖσιν, ἣ γαμεῖν οὐκ ἄξιον.

ΑΔ. οὐτ' ἦλθες ἐς τόνδ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ κληθεὶς τάφον  
 οὐτ' ἐν φίλοισι σὴν παρουσίαν λέγω.

κόσμον δὲ τὸν σὸν οὐποθ' ἦδ' ἐνδύσεται·  
 οὐ γάρ τι τῶν σῶν ἐνδεὴς ταφήσεται.  
 τότε ξυναλγεῖν χρῆν σ' ὅτ' ὠλλύμην ἐγώ.

σὺ δ' ἐκποδῶν στὰς καὶ παρεῖς ἄλλῳ θανεῖν  
 νέῳ γέρων ὦν, τόνδ' ἀποιμώζεις νεκρόν ;

οὐκ ἦσθ' ἄρ' ὀρθῶς τοῦδε σώματος πατήρ,  
 οὐδ' ἣ τεκεῖν φάσκουσα καὶ κεκλημένη

μήτηρ μ' ἔτικτε· δουλίῳ δ' ἀφ' αἵματος  
 μαστῷ γυναικὸς σῆς ὑπεβλήθην λάθρα.

ἔδειξας εἰς ἔλεγχον ἐξελθὼν ὃς εἶ,  
 καί μ' οὐ νομίζω παῖδα σὸν πεφυκέναι.

ἦ τᾶρα πάντων διαπρέπεις ἀψυχία,  
 ὃς τηλίκοςδ' ὦν κἀπὶ τέρμ' ἦκων βίου

οὐκ ἠθέλησας, οὐδ' ἐτόλμησας θανεῖν  
 τοῦ σοῦ πρὸ παιδός, ἀλλὰ τήνδ' εἰάσατε

γυναῖκ' ὀθνείαν, ἣν ἐγὼ καὶ μητέρα  
 πατέρα τ' ἂν ἐνδίκως ἂν ἡγοίμην μόνην.

καίτοι καλόν γ' ἂν τόνδ' ἀγῶν' ἡγωνίσω,  
 τοῦ σοῦ πρὸ παιδὸς κατθανὼν, βραχὺς δέ σοι

πάντως ὁ λοιπὸς ἦν βιώσιμος χρόνος·  
 [κἀγὼ τ' ἂν ἔζων χῆδε τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον,

κοῦκ ἂν μονωθεὶς ἔστενον κακοῖς ἐμοῖς.]  
 καὶ μὴν ὅσ' ἄνδρα χρὴ παθεῖν εὐδαίμονα

πέπονθας· ἥβησας μὲν ἐν τυραννίδι,  
 παῖς δ' ἦν ἐγὼ σοι τῶνδε διάδοχος δόμων,

ᾧστ' οὐκ ἄτεκνος κατθανὼν ἄλλοις δόμον

λείψειν ἔμελλες ὀρφανὸν διαρπάσαι.  
 οὐ μὴν ἔρεῖς γέ μ' ὥς ἀτιμάζων τὸ σὸν  
 γῆρας θανεῖν προὔδωκά σ', ὅστις αἰδούφρων  
 πρὸς σ' ἦν μάλιστα, κἀντὶ τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ χάριν 660  
 τοιάνδε καὶ σὺ χ' ἡ τεκοῦς' ἠλλαξάτην.  
 τοιγὰρ φυτεύων παῖδας οὐκέτ' ἂν φθάνοις,  
 οἳ γηροβοσκήσουσι καὶ θανόντα σε  
 περιστελοῦσι καὶ προθήσονται νεκρόν.  
 οὐ γάρ σ' ἔγωγε τῇδ' ἐμῇ θάψω χερί· 665  
 τέθνηκα γὰρ δὴ τοῦπὶ σ'. εἰ δ' ἄλλου τυχῶν  
 σωτήρος αὐγὰς εἰσορῶ, κείνου λέγω  
 καὶ παῖδά μ' εἶναι καὶ φίλον γηροτρόφον.  
 μάτην ἄρ' οἱ γέροντες εὖχονται θανεῖν,  
 γῆρας ψέγοντες καὶ μακρὸν χρόνον βίου. 670  
 ἦν δ' ἐγγὺς ἔλθῃ θάνατος, οὐδεὶς βούλεται  
 θνήσκειν, τὸ γῆρας δ' οὐκέτ' ἔστ' αὐτοῖς βαρύν.

ΧΟ. παύσασθ'. ἄλις γὰρ ἡ παροῦσα συμφορά,  
 ὦναξ, πατὴρ δὲ μὴ παροξύνῃς φρένα.

ΦΕ. ὦ παῖ, τί ν' αὐχεῖς, πότερα Λυδὸν ἢ Φρύγα 675  
 κακοῖς ἐλαύνειν ἀργυρώνητον σέθεν ;  
 οὐκ οἶσθα Θεσσαλὸν με κἀπὸ Θεσσαλοῦ  
 πατὴρ δὲ γεγῶτα, γνησίως ἐλεύθερον ;  
 ἄγαν ὑβρίζεις, καὶ νεανίας λόγους  
 ῥίπτων ἐς ἡμᾶς οὐ βαλὼν οὕτως ἄπει. 680  
 ἐγὼ δέ σ' οἴκων δεσπότην ἐγεινάμην  
 κἄθρεψ', ὀφείλω δ' οὔχ' ὑπερθνήσκειν σέθεν·  
 οὐ γὰρ πατρῶον τόνδ' ἐδεξάμην νόμον,  
 παῖδων προθνήσκειν πατέρας, οὐδ' Ἑλληνικόν.  
 σαυτῷ γάρ, εἴτε δυστυχὴς εἴτ' εὐτυχής, 685  
 ἔφυς· ἃ δ' ἡμῶν χρῆν σε τυγχάνειν, ἔχεις.  
 πολλῶν μὲν ἄρχεις, πολυπλέθρους δέ σοι γύας  
 λείψω· πατὴρ γὰρ ταῦτ' ἐδεξάμην πάρα.

τί δῆτά σ' ἠδίκηκα ; τοῦ σ' ἀποστερῶ ;  
 μὴ θνήσχ' ὑπὲρ τοῦδ' ἀνδρός, οὐδ' ἐγὼ πρὸ σοῦ. 690  
 χαίρεις ὀρώων φῶς, πατέρα δ' οὐ χαίρειν δοκεῖς ;  
 ἦ μὴν πολὺν γε τὸν κάτω λογίζομαι  
 χρόνον, τὸ δὲ ζῆν σμικρόν, ἀλλ' ὅμως γλυκύ.  
 σὺ γοῦν ἀναιδῶς διεμάχου τὸ μὴ θανεῖν,  
 καὶ ζῆς παρελθὼν τὴν πεπρωμένην τύχην, 695  
 ταύτην κατακτάς· εἴτ' ἐμὴν ἀψυχίαν  
 λέγεις, γυναικός, ᾧ κάκισθ', ἡσσημένος,  
 ἦ τοῦ καλοῦ σοῦ προὔθανεν νεανίου ;  
 σοφῶς δ' ἐφεῦρες, ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν ποτε,  
 εἰ τὴν παροῦσαν κατθανεῖν πείσεις ἀεὶ 700  
 γυναῖχ' ὑπὲρ σοῦ· κᾶτ' ὀνειδίζεις φίλοις  
 τοῖς μὴ θέλουσι δρᾶν τάδ', αὐτὸς ὦν κακός  
 σίγα· νόμιζε δ', εἰ σὺ τὴν σαντοῦ φιλεῖς  
 ψυχὴν, φιλεῖν ἅπαντας· εἰ δ' ἡμᾶς κακῶς  
 ἐρεῖς, ἀκούσει πολλὰ κοῦ ψευδῇ κακά. 705

- ΧΟ. πλείω λέλεκται νῦν τε καὶ τὰ πρὶν κακά·  
 παῦσαι δέ, πρέσβυ, παῖδα σὸν κακορροθῶν.  
 ΑΔ. λέγ', ὥς ἐμοῦ λέξαντος· εἰ δ' ἀλγεῖς κλύων  
 τάληθές, οὐ χρῆν σ' εἰς ἔμ' ἐξαμαρτάνειν.  
 ΦΕ. σοῦ δ' ἂν προθνήσκων μᾶλλον ἐξημάρτανον. 710  
 ΑΔ. ταῦτόν γὰρ ἡβῶντ' ἄνδρα καὶ πρέσβυν θανεῖν ;  
 ΦΕ. ψυχῇ μιᾷ ζῆν, οὐ δυοῖν, ὀφείλομεν.  
 ΑΔ. καὶ μὴν Διός γε μείζον' ἂν ζώης χρόνον.  
 ΦΕ. ἀρᾷ γονεῦσιν, οὐδὲν ἔκδικον παθῶν ;  
 ΑΔ. μακροῦ βίου γὰρ ἡσθόμην ἐρῶντά σε. 715  
 ΦΕ. ἀλλ' οὐ σὺ νεκρὸν ἀντὶ σοῦ τόνδ' ἐκφέρεις ;  
 ΑΔ. σημεία τῆς σῆς, ᾧ κάκιστ', ἀψυχίας.  
 ΦΕ. οὔτοι πρὸς ἡμῶν γ' ὤλετ'· οὐκ ἐρεῖς τόδε.  
 ΑΔ. φεῦ·  
 εἴθ' ἀνδρὸς ἔλθοις τοῦδέ γ' ἐς χρεῖαν ποτέ.

- ΦΕ. μνήστευε πολλάς, ὥς θάνωσι πλείονες. 720  
 ΑΔ. σοὶ τοῦτ' ὄνειδος· οὐ γὰρ ἤθελες θανεῖν.  
 ΦΕ. φίλον τὸ φέγγος τοῦτο τοῦ θεοῦ, φίλον.  
 ΑΔ. κακὸν τὸ λῆμα κοῦκ ἐν ἀνδράσιν τὸ σόν.  
 ΦΕ. οὐκ ἐγγελᾶς γέροντα βαστάζων νεκρόν.  
 ΑΔ. θανεῖ γε μέντοι δυσκλεῆς, ὅταν θάνῃς. 725  
 ΦΕ. κακῶς ἀκούειν οὐ μέλει θανόντι μοι.  
 ΑΔ. φεῦ φεῦ· τὸ γῆρας ὡς ἀναιδείας πλέων.  
 ΦΕ. ἦδ' οὐκ ἀναιδής· τήνδ' ἐφεῦρες ἄφρονα.  
 ΑΔ. ἄπελθε, καί με τόνδ' ἔα θάψαι νεκρόν.  
 ΦΕ. ἄπειμι· θάψεις δ' αὐτὸς ὦν αὐτῆς φονεύς, 730  
 δίκας δὲ δώσεις σοῖσι κηδεσταῖς ἔτι.  
 ἦ τάρ' Ἄκαστος οὐκέτ' ἔστ' ἐν ἀνδράσιν,  
 εἰ μή σ' ἀδελφῆς αἷμα τιμωρήσεται.  
 ΑΔ. ἔρροις νυν αὐτὸς χῆ ξυνοικήσασά σοι.  
 ἄπαιδε, παιδὸς ὄντος, ὥσπερ ἄξιοι, 735  
 γηράσκειτ'· οὐ γὰρ τῷδέ γ' ἐς ταῦτόν στέγος  
 νεῖσθ'· εἰ δ' ἀπειπεῖν χρήν με κηρύκων ὕπο  
 τὴν σὴν πατρίαν ἐστίαν, ἀπείπου ἄν.

(Exit PHERES.)

ἡμεῖς δέ, τοῦν ποσὶν γὰρ οἰστέον κακόν,  
 στείχωμεν, ὥς ἂν ἐν πυρᾷ θῶμεν νεκρόν. 740

(Exit ADMETUS with the funeral train, which the CHORUS  
 also accompany on its way with anapaests, leaving the  
 stage empty.)

### ΧΟΡΟΣ.

ὦ ἰώ, σχετλία τόλμης,  
 ὦ γενναία καὶ μέγ' ἀρίστη,  
 χαῖρε. πρόφρων σε χθονίός θ' Ἑρμῆς  
 Ἄιδης τε δέχοιτ'· εἰ δέ τι κάκει

πλέον ἔστ' ἀγαθοῖς, τούτων μετέχουσ' 745  
 Ἄιδου νύμφη παρεδρεύοις.

(Enter SERVANT from the palace, vexed and sullen.)

## ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ.

πολλοὺς μὲν ἤδη καπὸ παντοίας χθονὸς  
 ξένους μολόντας οἶδ' ἐς Ἀδμήτου δόμους,  
 οἷς δείπνα προὔθηκ'. ἀλλὰ τοῦδ' οὐπω ξένου  
 κακίον' ἐς τήνδ' ἐστίαν ἐδεξάμην. 750  
 ὃς πρῶτα μὲν πενθοῦντα δεσπότην ὄρων  
 εἰσῆλθε κατόλμησ' ἀμείψασθαι πύλας.  
 ἔπειτα δ' οὔτι σωφρόνως ἐδέξατο  
 τὰ προστυχόντα ξένια, συμφορὰν μαθών,  
 ἀλλ' εἴ τι μὴ φέρομεν, ὥτρυνεν φέρειν. 755  
 ποτῆρα δ' ἐν χείρεσσι κίσσινον λαβὼν  
 πίνει μελαίνης μητρὸς εὖζωρον μέθυ,  
 ἕως ἐθέρμην' αὐτὸν ἀμφιβᾶσα φλόξ  
 οἶνον· στέφει δὲ κρᾶτα μυρσίνης κλάδοις,  
 ἄμους' ὑλακτῶν, δισσὰ δ' ἦν μέλη κλύειν· 760  
 ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἦδε, τῶν ἐν Ἀδμήτου κακῶν  
 οὐδὲν προτιμῶν, οἰκέται δ' ἐκλαίομεν  
 δέσποιναν· ὄμμα δ' οὐκ ἐδείκνυμεν ξένῳ  
 τέγγοντες· Ἀδμητος γὰρ ᾧδ' ἐφίετο.  
 καὶ νῦν ἐγὼ μὲν ἐν δόμοισιν ἐστὶν 765  
 ξένον, πανοὔργον κλῶπα καὶ ληστήν τινα,  
 ἣ δ' ἐκ δόμων βέβηκεν, οὐδ' ἐφεσπόμην,  
 οὐδ' ἐξέτεινα χεῖρ', ἀποιμώζων ἐμὴν  
 δέσποιναν, ἣ μοι πᾶσί τ' οἰκέταισιν ἦν  
 μήτηρ· κακῶν γὰρ μυρίων ἐρρύετο, 770  
 ὄργας μαλάσσουσ' ἀνδρός. ἄρα τὸν ξένον  
 στυγῶ δικαίως, ἐν κακοῖς ἀφιγμένον ;



(Enter HERACLES, following the servant. He is crowned with myrtle.)

ἩΡΑΚΛΗΣ.

οὗτος, τί σεμνὸν καὶ πεφροντικὸς βλέπεις ;  
οὐ χρὴ σκυθρωπὸν τοῖς ξένοις τὸν πρόσπολον  
εἶναι, δέχεσθαι δ' εὐπροσηγόρῳ φρενί. 775  
σὺ δ' ἄνδρ' ἐταῖρον δεσπότην παρόνθ' ὄρων,  
στυγνῷ προσώπῳ καὶ συνωφρυωμένῳ  
δέχει, θυραίου πῆματος σπουδὴν ἔχων.  
δεῦρ' ἔλθ', ὅπως ἂν καὶ σοφώτερος γένη.  
τὰ θνητὰ πράγματ' οἶδας ἦν ἔχει φύσιν ; 780  
οἶμαι μὲν οὐ· πόθεν γάρ ; ἀλλ' ἄκουέ μου.  
βροτοῖς ἅπασι καπθανεῖν ὀφείλεται,  
κοῦκ ἔστι θνητῶν ὅστις ἐξεπίσταται  
τὴν αὔριον μέλλουσιν εἰ βιώσεται·  
τὸ τῆς τύχης γὰρ ἀφανὲς οἷ προβήσεται, 785  
κάστ' οὐ διδακτόν, οὐδ' ἀλίσκεται τέχνῃ.  
ταῦτ' οὖν ἀκούσας καὶ μαθὼν ἐμοῦ πάρα,  
εὐφραίνε σαντόν, πῖνε, τὸν καθ' ἡμέραν  
βίον λογίζου σόν, τὰ δ' ἄλλα τῆς τύχης.  
τίμα δὲ καὶ τὴν πλείστον ἡδίστην θεῶν 790  
Κύπριν βροτοῖσιν· εὐμενὴς γὰρ ἡ θεός.  
τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἔασον ταῦτα, καὶ πείθου λόγοις  
ἐμοῖσιν, εἶπερ ὀρθά σοι δοκῶ λέγειν·  
οἶμαι μέν. οὐκ οὖν τὴν ἄγαν λύπην ἀφείς  
πῖε μεθ' ἡμῶν τάσδ' ὑπερβαλὼν πύλας, 795  
στεφάνοις πυκασθεῖς ; καὶ σάφ' οἶδ' ὁθούνεκα  
τοῦ νῦν σκυθρωποῦ καὶ ξυνεστῶτος φρενῶν  
μεθορμιεῖ σε πίτυλος ἐμπεσὼν σκύφου.  
ὄντας δὲ θνητοὺς θνητὰ καὶ φρονεῖν χρεών,  
ὥς τοῖς γε σεμνοῖς καὶ συνωφρυωμένοις 800

ἅπασιν ἔστιν, ὥς γ' ἔμοι χρήσθαι κριτῇ,  
οὐ βίος ἀληθῶς ὁ βίος, ἀλλὰ συμφορά.

ΘΕ. ἐπιστάμεσθα ταῦτα· νῦν δὲ πράσσομεν  
οὐχ οἷα κώμου καὶ γέλωτος ἄξια.

ΗΡ. γυνὴ θυραῖος ἢ θανοῦσα· μὴ λίαν 805  
πένθει· δόμων γὰρ ζῶσι τῶνδε δεσπότες.

ΘΕ. τί ζῶσιν; οὐ κάτοισθα τὰν δόμοις κακά.

ΗΡ. εἰ μή τι σός με δεσπότης ἐψεύσατο.

ΘΕ. ἄγαν ἐκείνός ἐστ' ἄγαν φιλόξενος.

ΗΡ. οὐ χρῆν μ' ὀθνεῖλου γ' οὔνεκ' εὖ πάσχειν νεκροῦ;

ΘΕ. ἦ κάρτα μέντοι καὶ λίαν οἰκεῖος ἦν. 811

ΗΡ. μῶν ξυμφοράν τιν' οὔσαν οὐκ ἔφραζέ μοι;

ΘΕ. χαίρων ἴθ'· ἡμῖν δεσποτῶν μέλει κακά.

ΗΡ. ὃδ' οὐ θυραίων πημάτων ἄρχει λόγος.

ΘΕ. οὐ γάρ τι κωμάζοντ' ἂν ἡχθόμην σ' ὀρών. 815

ΗΡ. ἀλλ' ἦ πέπονθα δεῖν' ὑπὸ ξένων ἐμῶν;

ΘΕ. οὐκ ἦλθες ἐν δέοντι δέξασθαι δόμοις·  
πένθος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἔστι· καὶ κουράν βλέπεις  
μελαμπέπλους στολμούς τε.

ΗΡ. τίς δ' ὁ κατθανών;

μῶν ἢ τέκνων τι φροῦδον ἢ πατὴρ γέρων; 820

ΘΕ. γυνὴ μὲν οὖν ὄλωλεν Ἀδμήτου, ξένε.

ΗΡ. τί φής; ἔπειτα δητὰ μ' ἐξενίζετε;

ΘΕ. ἦδεῖτο γάρ σε τῶνδ' ἀπώσασθαι δόμων.

ΗΡ. ᾧ σχέτλι', οἷας ἡμπλακες ξυναόρου.

ΘΕ. ἀπωλόμεσθα πάντες, οὐ κείνη μόνη. 825

ΗΡ. ἀλλ' ἦσθόμην μέν, ὅμμ' ἰδὼν δακρυρροοῦν  
κουράν τε καὶ πρόσωπον· ἀλλ' ἔπειθέ με  
λέγων θυραῖον κῆδος ἐς τάφον φέρειν.  
βία δὲ θυμοῦ τάσδ' ὑπερβαλὼν πύλας  
ἔπινον ἀνδρὸς ἐν φιλοξένου δόμοις, 830  
πράσσοντος οὔτω. κᾶτα κωμάζω κᾶρα

στεφάνοις πυκασθείς; ἀλλὰ σοῦ τὸ μὴ φράσαι,  
κακοῦ τοσούτου δώμασιν προσκειμένου.

ποῦ καὶ σφε θάπτει; ποῦ νιν εὐρήσω μολών;

ΘΕ. ὀρθὴν παρ' οἶμον, ἧ 'πὶ Λάρισσαν φέρει, 835  
τύμβον κατόψει ξεστὸν ἐκ προαστίου.

ΗΡ. ὦ πολλὰ τλᾶσα καρδία ψυχὴ τ' ἐμή,  
νῦν δεῖξον οἶον παῖδά σ' ἢ Τιρυνθία  
'Ηλεκτρύονος ἐγείνατ' 'Αλκμήνη Δί.

δεῖ γάρ με σῶσαι τὴν θανοῦσαν ἀρτίως 840

γυναῖκα κὰς τόνδ' αὖθις ἰδρῦσαι δόμον

'Αλκηστιν, 'Αδμήτῳ θ' ὑπουργῆσαι χάριν.

ἐλθὼν δ' ἄνακτα τὸν μελάμπεπλον νεκρῶν

Θάνατον φυλάξω, καὶ νιν εὐρήσειν δοκῶ, 845  
πίνοντα τύμβον πλησίον προσφαγμάτων.

κἄνπερ λοχήσας αὐτὸν ἐξ ἔδρας συθεῖς

μάρψω, κύκλον δὲ περιβάλω χεροῖν ἐμαῖν,

οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις αὐτὸν ἐξαιρήσεται

μογοῦντα πλευρά, πρὶν γυναῖκ' ἐμοὶ μεθῇ.

ἦν δ' οὖν ἀμάρτω τῆσδ' ἄγρας, καὶ μὴ μόλη 850

πρὸς αἵματηρὸν πέλανον, εἶμι τῶν κάτω

Κόρης ἄνακτός τ' εἰς ἀνηλίους δόμους,

αἰτήσομαί τε· καὶ πέποιθ' ἄξιεν ἄνω

'Αλκηστιν, ὥστε χερσὶν ἐνθεῖναι ξένου,

ὅς μ' ἐς δόμους ἐδέξατ' οὐδ' ἀπήλασε, 855

καίπερ βαρεῖα συμφορὰ πεπληγμένος,

ἔκρυπτε δ', ὧν γενναῖος, αἰδεσθεὶς ἐμέ.

τίς τοῦδε μᾶλλον Θεσσαλῶν φιλόξενος;

τίς 'Ελλάδ' οἰκῶν; τοιγὰρ οὐκ ἐρεῖ κακὸν

εὐεργετῆσαι φῶτα γενναῖος γεγώς, 860

(Exit HERACLES into the palace, which he afterwards leaves  
by another door for the tomb of ALCESTIS, on the road  
to Larissa.)

(Enter ADMETUS and train, with the CHORUS, approaching from the funeral pyre.)

- ΑΔ. ἰὼ ἰώ, στυγναὶ πρόσοδοι,  
 στυγναὶ δ' ὄψεις χήρων μελάθρων.  
 ἰὼ μοί μοι, ἔ ἔ.  
 ποῖ βῶ; πᾶ στῶ; τί λέγω; τί δὲ μή;  
 πῶς ἂν ὀλοίμαν; 865
- ἦ βαρυδαίμονα μήτηρ μ' ἔτεκεν.  
 ζηλῶ φθιμένους, κείνων ἔραμαι,  
 κεῖν' ἐπιθυμῶ δώματα ναίνειν.  
 οὔτε γὰρ αὐγὰς χαίρω προσορῶν,  
 οὔτ' ἐπὶ γαίας πόδα πεζεύων·  
 τοῖον ὄμηρόν μ' ἀποσυλήσας 870  
 Ἄϊδη Θάνατος παρέδωκεν.
- ΧΟ. πρόβα πρόβα· βᾶθι κεῦθος οἴκων, στροφὴ α'  
 ΑΔ. αἰαῖ.  
 ΧΟ. πέπονθας ἄξι' αἰαγμάτων.  
 ΑΔ. ἔ ἔ.  
 ΧΟ. δι' ὁδύνας ἔβας,  
 σάφ' οἶδα.  
 ΑΔ. φεῦ φεῦ.  
 ΧΟ. τὰν νέρθεν οὐδὲν ὠφελείς. 875  
 ΑΔ. ἰὼ μοί μοι.  
 ΧΟ. τὸ μήποτ' εἰσιδεῖν φιλίας ἀλόχου  
 πρόσσωπον† ἅντα λυπρόν.  
 ΑΔ. ἔμνησας ὃ μου φρένας ἤλκωσεν·  
 τί γὰρ ἀνδρὶ κακὸν μεῖζον ἁμαρτεῖν  
 πιστῆς ἀλόχου; μή ποτε γήμας 880  
 ὥφελον οἰκεῖν μετὰ τῆσδε δόμους.  
 ζηλῶ δ' ἀγάμους ἀτέκνους τε βροτῶν.  
 μία γὰρ ψυχὴ· τῆς ὑπεραλγείν  
 μέτριον ἄχθος·

- παίδων δὲ νόσους καὶ νυμφιδίους 885  
 εὐνάς θανάτοις κεραϊζόμενας  
 οὐ τλητὸν ὄραν, ἔξδ' ἀτέκνους  
 ἀγάμους τ' εἶναι διὰ παντός.
- ΧΟ. τύχα τύχα δυσπάλαιστος ἦκει. ἀντιστροφή α'
- ΑΔ. αἰαί.
- ΧΟ. πέρας δέ γ' οὐδὲν ἀλγέων τίθης. 890
- ΑΔ. ἔξ.
- ΧΟ. βαρέα μὲν φέρειν,  
 ὅμως δὲ
- ΑΔ. φεῦ φεῦ.
- ΧΟ. τλᾶθ'· οὐ σὺ πρῶτος ὤλεσας
- ΑΔ. ἰὼ μοί μοι.
- ΧΟ. γυναῖκα· συμφορὰ δ' ἐτέρους ἐτέρα  
 πιέζει φανείσα θνατῶν.
- ΑΔ. ὦ μακρὰ πένθη λῦπαί τε φίλων 895  
 τῶν ὑπὸ γαίαν,  
 τί μ' ἐκώλυσας ῥῖψαι τύμβου  
 τάφρου ἐς κοίλην, καὶ μετ' ἐκείνης  
 τῆς μέγ' ἀρίστης κείσθαι φθίμενον;  
 δύο δ' ἀντὶ μιᾶς Ἄιδης ψυχὰς 900  
 τὰς πιστοτάτας σὺν ἂν ἔσχεν, ὁμοῦ  
 χθονίαν λίμνην διαβάντε.
- ΧΟ. ἐμοί τις ἦν ἐν γένει, ᾧ κόρος ἀξιόθρηνος στροφή β'  
 ὥχετ' ἐν δόμοισι 905  
 μονόπαις· ἀλλ' ἔμπας  
 ἔφερε κακὸν ἄλις, ἄτεκνος ὢν,  
 πολιὰς ἐπὶ χαίτας  
 ἥδη προπετῆς ὢν  
 βιότου τε πόρσω. 910
- ΑΔ. ὦ σχῆμα δόμων, πῶς εἰσέλθω;  
 πῶς δ' οἰκήσω, μεταπίπτοντος

δαίμονος; οἵμοι. πολὺ γὰρ τὸ μέσον·  
 τότε μὲν πεύκαις σὺν Πηλιάσιν, 915  
 σὺν θ' ὕμεναίοις ἔστειχον ἔσω,  
 φιλίας ἀλόχου χέρα βαστάζων.  
 πολυάχητος δ' εἶπετο κῶμος,  
 τήν τε θανοῦσαν κᾶμ' ὀλβίζων,  
 ὥς εὐπατρίδαι καὶ ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρων 920  
 ὄντες ἀριστέων σύζυγες εἶμεν,  
 νῦν δ' ὕμεναίων γόος ἀντίπαλος,  
 λευκῶν τε πέπλων μέλανες στολμοὶ  
 πέμπουσί μ' ἔσω  
 λέκτρων κοίτας ἐς ἐρήμους. 925

[ἀντιστροφή β']

ΧΟ. παρ' εὐτυχῇ σοι πότμον ἦλθεν ἀπειροκάκῃ τόδ'  
 ἄλγος· ἀλλ' ἔσωσας  
 βίοτον καὶ ψυχάν.  
 ἔθανε δάμαρ, ἔλιπε φιλίαν· 930  
 τί νέον τόδε; πολλοὺς  
 ἤδη παρέλυσεν  
 θάνατος δάμαρτος.

ΑΔ. φίλοι, γυναικὸς δαίμον' εὐτυχέστερον 935  
 τοῦμοῦ νομίζω, καίπερ οὐ δοκοῦνθ' ὅμως·  
 τῆς μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἄλγος ἄψεταιί ποτε,  
 πολλῶν δὲ μόχθων εὐκλεῆς ἐπαύσατο.  
 ἐγὼ δ', ὃν οὐ χρῆν ζῆν, παρεῖς τὸ μόρσιμον,  
 λυπρὸν διάξω βίοτον· ἄρτι μανθάνω. 940  
 πῶς γὰρ δόμων τῶνδ' εἰσόδους ἀνέξομαι;  
 τίν' ἂν προσειπῶν, τοῦ δὲ προσρηθεὶς ὕπο,  
 τερπνῆς τύχοιμ' ἂν εἰσόδου; ποῖ τρέφομαι;  
 ἢ μὲν γὰρ ἔνδον ἐξελεῖ μ' ἐρημία,  
 γυναικὸς εὐνὰς εὐτ' ἂν εἰσίδω κενὰς 945  
 θρόνους τ' ἐν οἴσιν ἴζε, καὶ κατὰ στέγας

αὐχμηρὸν οὐδας, τέκνα δ' ἀμφὶ γούνασι  
 πίπτοντα κλαίῃ μητέρ', οἱ δὲ δεσπότην  
 στένωσιν οἶαν ἐκ δόμων ἀπώλεσαν.  
 τὰ μὲν κατ' οἶκον τοιάδ'· ἔξωθεν δέ με 950  
 γάμοι τ' ἐλῶσι Θεσσαλῶν καὶ ξύλλογοι  
 γυναικοπληθεῖς· οὐ γὰρ ἐξανέξομαι  
 λεύσσω δάμαρτος τῆς ἐμῆς ὁμήλικας.  
 ἐρεῖ δέ μ' ὅστις ἐχθρὸς ὦν κυρεῖ τάδε·  
 ἰδοῦ τὸν αἰσχροῦς ζῶνθ', ὃς οὐκ ἔτλη θανεῖν, 955  
 ἀλλ' ἦν ἔγηνμεν ἀντιδοὺς ἀψυχία  
 πέφευγεν Ἄϊδην· καὶτ' ἀνὴρ εἶναι δοκεῖ;  
 στρυγεί δὲ τοὺς τεκόντας, αὐτὸς οὐ θέλων  
 θανεῖν· τοιάνδε πρὸς κακοῖσι κληδόνα  
 ἔξω. τί μοι ζῆν δῆτα κύδιον, φίλοι, 960  
 κακῶς κλύονται καὶ κακῶς πεπραγότει;

(ADMETUS remains on the stage during the song of the  
 CHORUS.)

### THIRD STASIMON.

#### ΧΟΡΟΣ.

ἐγὼ καὶ διὰ μούσας στροφή α'  
 καὶ μετάρσιος ἦξα, καὶ  
 πλείστων ἀψάμενος λόγων  
 κρεῖσσον οὐδὲν ἀνάγκας 965  
 εὖρον, οὐδέ τι φάρμακον  
 Θρήσσαις ἐν σανίσιν, τὰς  
 Ὀρφεία κατέγραψεν  
 γῆρυς, οὐδ' ὅσα Φοῖβος Ἀσκληπιάδαις ἔδωκε 970  
 φάρμακα πολυπόνοις ἀντιτεμῶν βροτοῖσιν.  
 μόνας δ' οὐτ' ἐπὶ βωμοὺς ἀντιστροφή α'  
 ἐλθεῖν οὔτε βρέτας θεῶς

ἔστιν, οὐ σφαγίων κλύει. 975

μή μοι, πότνια, μείζων

ἔλθοις ἢ τὸ πρὶν ἐν βίῳ.

καὶ γὰρ Ζεὺς ὃ τι νεύσῃ,

σὺν σοὶ τοῦτο τελευτᾷ.

καὶ τὸν ἐν Χαλύβοις δαμάξεις σὺ βία σίδαρον, 980

οὐδέ τις ἀποτόμου λήματός ἐστιν αἰδώς.

[στροφὴ β'

καὶ σ' ἐν ἀφύκτοισι χερῶν εἴλε θεὰ δεσμοῖς·

τόλμα δ'· οὐ γὰρ ἀνάξεις ποτ' ἐνερθεν 985

κλαίων τοὺς φθιμένους ἄνω.

καὶ θεῶν σκότιοι φθίνουσι

παῖδες ἐν θανάτῳ. 990

φίλα μὲν ὅτ' ἦν μεθ' ἡμῶν,

φίλα δὲ καὶ θανοῦς' ἔτ' ἔσται·

γενναιοτάταν δὲ πασᾶν

ἔξεύξω κλισίαις ἄκοιτιν.

[ἀντιστροφὴ β'

μηδὲ νεκρῶν ὥς φθιμένων χῶμα νομιζέσθω 995

τύμβος σᾶς ἀλόχου, θεοῖσι δ' ὁμοίως

τιμάσθω, σέβας ἐμπόρων 1000

καὶ τις δοχμίαν κέλευθον

ἐμβαίνων τὸδ' ἐρεῖ·

αὐτα ποτὲ προὔθαν' ἀνδρός,

νῦν δ' ἐστὶ μάκαιρα δαίμων,

χαῖρ', ὦ πότνι', εὖ δὲ δόλῃς.

τοῖαί νιν προσερούσι φῆμαι. 1005

καὶ μὴν ὅδ', ὥς ἔοικεν, Ἀλκμήνης γόνος,

\* Ἀδμητε, πρὸς σὴν ἐστίαν πορεύεται.



## EXODUS.

(Enter HERACLES, from the grave of ALCESTIS, accompanied by a veiled woman.)

HP. φίλον πρὸς ἄνδρα χρὴ λέγειν ἑλευθέρως,  
 Ἄδμητε, μομφὰς δ' οὐχ ὑπὸ σπλάγχνοις ἔχειν  
 σιγῶντ'. ἐγὼ δὲ σοῖς κακοῖσιν ἡξίουν 1010  
 ἐγγὺς παρεστὼς ἐξετάζεσθαι φίλος·  
 σὺ δ' οὐκ ἔφραζες σῆς προκείμενον νέκυν  
 γυναικός, ἀλλὰ μ' ἐξένιζες ἐν δόμοις,  
 ὥς δὴ θυραίου πῆματος σπουδὴν ἔχων.  
 κᾶστεψα κρᾶτα καὶ θεοῖς ἐλειψάμην 1015  
 σπονδὰς ἐν οἴκοις δυστυχοῦσι τοῖσι σοῖς.  
 καὶ μέμφομαι μὲν μέμφομαι παθὼν τάδε,  
 οὐ μὴν σε λυπεῖν ἐν κακοῖσι βούλομαι.  
 ὦν δ' οὐνεχ' ἦκω δεῦρ' ὑποστρέψας πάλιν  
 λέξω. γυναιῖκα τήνδε μοι σῶσον λαβών, 1020  
 ἕως ἂν ἵππους δεῦρο Θρηκίας ἄγων  
 ἔλθω, τύραννον Βιστόνων κατακτανών.  
 πράξας δ' ὃ μὴ τύχοιμι, νοστήσαιμι γάρ,  
 δίδωμι τήνδε σοῖσι προσπολεῖν δόμοις.  
 πολλῶ δὲ μόχθῳ χεῖρας ἦλθεν εἰς ἐμάς· 1025  
 ἀγῶνα γὰρ πάνδημον εὐρίσκω τινὰς  
 τιθέντας ἀθληταῖσιν, ἄξιον πόνον,  
 ὅθεν κομίζω τήνδε νικητήρια  
 λαβών· τὰ μὲν γὰρ κοῦφα τοῖς νικῶσιν ἦν  
 ἵππους ἄγεσθαι, τοῖσι δ' αὖ τὰ μείζονα 1030  
 νικῶσι, πυγμὴν καὶ πάλην, βουφόρβια·  
 γυνὴ δ' ἐπ' αὐτοῖς εἶπετ'. ἐντυχόντι δὲ  
 αἰσχροὺν παρεῖναι κέρδος ἦν τόδ' εὐκλεές.

ἀλλ', ὥσπερ εἶπον, σοὶ μέλειν γυναιῖκα χρή·  
οὐ γὰρ κλοπαίαν, ἀλλὰ σὺν πόνῳ λαβῶν 1035  
ἦκω· χρόνῳ δὲ καὶ σύ μ' αἰνέσεις ἴσως.

ΑΔ. οὗτοι σ' ἀτίζων οὐδ' ἐν ἐχθροῖσιν τιθεῖς  
ἔκρυσ' ἐμῆς γυναικὸς ἀθλίους τύχας·  
ἀλλ' ἄλγος ἄλγει τοῦτ' ἂν ἦν προσκείμενον,  
εἴ του πρὸς ἄλλον δώμαθ' ὠρμήθης ξένου· 1040  
ἄλις δὲ κλαίειν τοῦμὸν ἦν ἐμοὶ κακόν.  
γυναιῖκα δ', εἴ πως ἔστιν, αἰτοῦμαί σ', ἄναξ,  
ἄλλον τιν' ὅστις μὴ πέπονθεν οἷ' ἐγὼ  
σώζειν ἄνωχθι Θεσσαλῶν· πολλοὶ δέ σοι  
ξένοι Φεραίων· μή μ' ἀναμνήσης κακῶν. 1045  
οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην τήνδ' ὀρῶν ἐν δώμασιν  
ἄδακρυς εἶναι· μὴ νοσοῦντί μοι νόσον  
προσθῆς· ἄλις γὰρ συμφορᾷ βαρύνομαι.  
ποῦ καὶ τρέφοιτ' ἂν δωμάτων νέα γυνή ;  
νέα γάρ, ὥς ἐσθῆτι καὶ κόσμῳ πρόπει. 1050  
πότερα κατ' ἀνδρῶν δῆτ' ἐνοικήσει στέγην ;  
καὶ πῶς ἀκραιφνῆς, ἐν νέοις στρωφωμένη,  
ἔσται ; τὸν ἡβῶνθ', Ἡράκλεις, οὐ ῥάδιον  
εἶργειν· ἐγὼ δέ σου προμηθίαν ἔχω.  
ἢ τῆς θανούσης θάλαμον ἐσβήσας τρέφω ; 1055  
καὶ πῶς ἐπεσφρῶ τήνδε τῷ κείνης λέχει ;  
διπλὴν φοβοῦμαι μέμψιν, ἔκ τε δημοτῶν,  
μή τίς μ' ἐλέγξῃ τὴν ἐμὴν εὐεργέτιν  
προδόντ' ἐν ἄλλης δεμνίοις πίτνειν νέας,  
καὶ τῆς θανούσης, ἀξία δέ μοι σέβειν, 1060  
πολλὴν πρόνοιαν δεῖ μ' ἔχειν. σὺ δ', ὦ γύναι,  
ἥτις ποτ' εἶ σύ, ταῦτ' ἔχουσ' Ἀλκῆστιδι  
μορφῆς μέτρ' ἴσθι, καὶ προσήϊζαι δέμας.  
οἴμοι. κόμιζε πρὸς θεῶν ἀπ' ὀμμάτων  
γυναιῖκα τήνδε, μή μ' ἔλῃς ἡρημένον. 1065

δοκῶ γὰρ αὐτὴν εἰσορῶν γυναιῖχ' ὄρᾶν  
ἐμήν· θολοῖ δὲ καρδίαν, ἐκ δ' ὀμμάτων  
πηγαὶ κατερρώγασιν· ὦ τλήμων ἐγὼ  
ὥς ἄρτι πένθους τοῦδε γεύομαι πικροῦ.

ΧΟ. ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἔχοιμ' ἂν εὖ λέγειν τύχην· 1070

χρὴ δ', ὅστις εἴσι, καρτερεῖν θεοῦ δόσιν.

ΗΡ. εἰ γὰρ τοσαύτην δύναμιν εἶχον ὥστε σὴν  
ἐς φῶς πορεύσαι νερτέρων ἐκ δωμάτων  
γυναικα, καὶ σοι τήνδε πορσῦναι χάριν.

ΑΔ. σάφ' οἶδα βούλεσθαί σ' ἄν. ἀλλὰ ποῦ τόδε; 1075  
οὐκ ἔστι τοὺς θανόντας ἐς φάος μολεῖν.

ΗΡ. μή νυν ὑπέρβαλλ', ἀλλ' ἐναισίμως φέρε.

ΑΔ. ῥᾶον παραινεῖν ἢ παθόντα καρτερεῖν.

ΗΡ. τί δ' ἂν προκόπτοις, εἰ θέλεις ἀεὶ στένειν;

ΑΔ. ἔγνωκα καὐτός, ἀλλ' ἔρως τις ἐξάγει. 1080

ΗΡ. τὸ γὰρ φιλῆσαι τὸν θανόντ' ἄγει δάκρυ.

ΑΔ. ἀπώλεσέν με, καῖτι μᾶλλον ἢ λέγω.

ΗΡ. γυναικὸς ἐσθλῆς ἤμπλακες· τίς ἀντερεῖ;

ΑΔ. ὥστ' ἄνδρα τόνδε μηκέθ' ἥδεσθαι βίβ.

ΗΡ. χρόνος μαλάξει, νῦν δ' ἔθ' ἡβάσκει κακόν. 1085

ΑΔ. χρόνον λέγοις ἄν, εἰ χρόνος τὸ κατθανεῖν.

ΗΡ. γυνή σε παύσει καὶ νέου γάμου πόθος.

ΑΔ. σίγησον· οἶον εἶπας. οὐκ ἂν ῥόμην.

ΗΡ. τί δ'; οὐ γαμεῖς γάρ, ἀλλὰ χηρεύσει λέχος;

ΑΔ. οὐκ ἔστιν ἥτις τῷδε συγκλιθήσεται. 1090

ΗΡ. μὴν τὴν θανοῦσαν ὠφελεῖν τι προσδοκᾷς;

ΑΔ. κείνην ὅπουπέρ ἐστι τιμᾶσθαι χρεών.

ΗΡ. αἰνῶ μὲν αἰνῶ· μωρίαν δ' ὀφλίσκάνεις.

ΑΔ. ὥς μήποτ' ἄνδρα τόνδε νυμφίον καλῶν.

ΗΡ. ἐπῆνεσ' ἀλόχῳ πιστὸς οὔνεκ' εἶ φίλος. 1095

ΑΔ. θάνοιμ' ἐκείνην καίπερ οὐκ οὔσαν προδοῦς.

ΗΡ. δέχου νυν εἴσω τήνδε γενναίων δόμων.

ΑΔ. μή, πρὸς σε τοῦ σπείραντος ἄντομαι Διός.

ΗΡ. καὶ μὴν ἁμαρτήσῃ γε μὴ δράσας τάδε.

ΑΔ. καὶ δρῶν γε λύπη καρδίαν δηχθήσομαι. 1100

ΗΡ. πιθοῦ· τάχ' ἂν γὰρ ἐς δέον πέσοι χάρις.

ΑΔ. φεῦ·

εἴθ' ἐξ ἀγῶνος τήνδε μὴ ἴλαβές ποτε.

ΗΡ. νικῶντι μέντοι καὶ σὺ συννικᾷς ἐμοί.

ΑΔ. καλῶς ἔλεξας· ἡ γυνὴ δ' ἀπελθέτω.

ΗΡ. ἅπαισι, εἰ χρή· πρῶτα δ' εἰ χρεῶν ἄθρει. 1105

ΑΔ. χρή, σοῦ γε μὴ μέλλοντος ὀργαίνειν ἐμοί.

ΗΡ. εἰδώς τι καγὼ τήνδ' ἔχω προθυμίαν.

ΑΔ. νίκα νυν. οὐ μὴν ἀνδάνοντέ μοι ποιεῖς.

ΗΡ. ἀλλ' ἔσθ' ὅθ' ἡμᾶς αἰνέσεις· πιθοῦ μόνον.

ΑΔ. κομίζετ', εἰ χρή τήνδε δέξασθαι δόμοις. 1110

ΗΡ. οὐκ ἂν μεθείην σοῖς γυναῖκα προσπόλοις.

ΑΔ. σὺ δ' αὐτὸς αὐτὴν εἴσαγ', εἰ δοκεῖ, δόμους.

ΗΡ. ἐς σὰς μὲν οὖν ἔγωγε θήσομαι χέρας.

ΑΔ. οὐκ ἂν θίγοιμι, δῶμα δ' εἰσελθεῖν πάρα.

ΗΡ. τῇ σῇ πέποιθα χειρὶ δεξιᾷ μόνῃ. 1115

ΑΔ. ἄναξ, βιάζει μ' οὐ θέλοντα δρᾶν τάδε.

ΗΡ. τόλμα προτείνειν χεῖρα καὶ θιγεῖν ξένης.

ΑΔ. καὶ δὴ προτείνω, Γοργόν' ὥς κατατόμφ.

ΗΡ. ἔχεις;

ΑΔ. ἔχω.

ΗΡ. ναί, σῶζέ νυν, καὶ τὸν Διὸς

φήσεις ποτ' εἶναι παῖδα γενναῖον ξένον. 1120

βλέψον δ' ἐς αὐτήν, εἴ τι σῇ δοκεῖ πρέπειν

γυναικί· λύπης δ' εὐτυχῶν μεθίστασο.

ΑΔ. ὦ θεοί, τί λέξω; θαῦμ' ἀνέλπιστον τόδε·

(ADMETUS withdraws the veil and discovers ALCESTIS.)

γυναῖκα λεύσσω τήνδ' ἐμὴν ἐτητύμως,

- ἡ κέρτομός με θεοῦ τις ἐκπλήσσει χαρά; 1125
- HP. οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ τήνδ' ὀρέξῃ δάμαρτα σήν.
- ΑΔ. ὄρα γε μή τι φάσμα νερτέρων τόδ' ἦ.
- HP. οὐ ψυχαγωγὸν τόνδ' ἐποιήσω ξένον.
- ΑΔ. ἀλλ' ἦν ἔθαπτον εἰσορῶ δάμαρτ' ἐμήν;
- HP. σάφ' ἴσθ'. ἀπιστεῖν δ' οὐ σε θαυμάζω τύχη. 1130
- ΑΔ. θίγω, προσείπω ζῶσαν ὥς δάμαρτ' ἐμήν;
- HP. πρόσσειπ'. ἔχεις γὰρ πᾶν ὅσον περ ἤθελες.
- ΑΔ. ὦ φιλτάτης γυναικὸς ὄμμα καὶ δέμας,  
ἔχω σ' ἀέλπτως, οὔ ποτ' ὄψεσθαι δοκῶν.
- HP. ἔχεις· φθόνος δὲ μὴ γένοιτό τις θεῶν. 1135
- ΑΔ. ὦ τοῦ μεγίστου Ζηνὸς εὐγενὲς τέκνον,  
εὐδαιμονοίης, καὶ σ' ὃ φιτύσας πατήρ  
σώζοι· σὺ γὰρ δὴ τᾶμ' ἀνώρθωσας μόνος.  
πῶς τήνδ' ἔπεμψας νέρθεν ἐς φάος τόδε;
- HP. μάχην συνάψας δαιμόνων τῷ κοιράνῳ. 1140
- ΑΔ. ποῦ τόνδε Θανάτῳ φῆς ἀγῶνα συμβαλεῖν;
- HP. τύμβον παρ' αὐτὸν ἐκ λόχου μάρψας χερσίν.
- ΑΔ. τί γάρ ποθ' ἦδ' ἄναυδος ἔστηκεν γυνή;
- HP. οὔπω θέμις σοι τῆσδε προσφωνημάτων  
κλύειν, πρὶν ἂν θεοῖσι τοῖσι νερτέροις 1145  
ἀφαγνίσηται καὶ τρίτον μόλη φάος.  
ἀλλ' εἴσαγ' εἴσω τήνδε· καὶ δίκαιος ὦν  
τὸ λοιπόν, Ἄδμητ', εὐσέβει περὶ ξένους.  
καὶ χαῖρ'. ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν προκειμένον πόνον  
Σθενέλου τυράννῳ παιδὶ πορσυνῶ μολών. 1150
- ΑΔ. μείνον παρ' ἡμῖν καὶ ξυνέστιος γενοῦ.
- HP. αὐθις τόδ' ἔσται, νῦν δ' ἐπείγεσθαί με δεῖ.
- ΑΔ. ἀλλ' εὐτυχοίης, νόστιμον δ' ἔλθοις πόδα.  
ἄστοις δὲ πάσῃ τ' ἐννέπω τετραρχίᾳ  
χοροὺς ἐπ' ἐσθλαῖς συμφοραῖσιν ἰστάναι 1155  
βωμούς τε κνισᾶν βουθύτοισι προστροπαῖς.

νῦν γὰρ μεθηρμόσμεσθα βελτίῳ βίῳ  
 τοῦ πρόσθεν· οἱ γὰρ εὐτυχῶν ἀρνήσομαι.

(*Exeunt ADMETUS with ALCESTIS into the palace, HERACLES as leaving the city.*)

### ΧΟΡΟΣ.

πολλὰ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων,  
 πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί·  
 καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,  
 τῶν δ' ἀδοκῆτων πόρον εὔρε θεός.  
 τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.

1160

(*Exit CHORUS.*)

THE END.



# EURIPIDES

## ALCESTIS

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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PART II.—NOTES

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## NOTES.

*Prologue*, ll. 1-27. This is an introductory monologue, explaining the circumstances of the play; first brought into regular use by Euripides, though occasionally employed by Aeschylus and Sophocles (as in the *Eumenides* and *Trachiniae*). At l. 28 it passes into a dialogue between Apollo and Thanatos, the whole forming the Prologue properly so called, which Aristotle defines as 'all that part of a tragedy which precedes the first entrance of the Chorus' (l. 77).

*Scene*. A portion of the town of Pherae, with the palace of Admetus in the background. Enter APOLLO from the interior with his bow and quiver. '*House of Admetus, scene of my grateful service, farewell! God though I be, I have been thrall to a mortal man; so Zeus ordained. For his piety hath my master been blest through me; and now I have saved him from death, the Fates granting me this, should he find a substitute. But only his wife would make this sacrifice, who is even now breathing her last, for the fatal day is come. But I must depart, ere pollution reach me from the corpse; and lo! here is Death, waiting to seize his prey.*'

l. 1. ὦ δῶματ' Ἀδμήτεια. This is an exclamation rather than an address. Cp. l. 569 n. The 'house of Admetus' is barely mentioned again in l. 23, where Apollo gives his reason for leaving it. The object of this appeal is to fix the scene and define the circumstances of the action. So in the *Electra* the first speaker apostrophises the Argive land, his home, and the *Andromache* opens with the line—

Ἀσιατίδος γῆς σχῆμα, Θηβαία πόλις.

ἐτλην, 'submitted,' as in l. 572. The root is the same as in *tollo*, *tuli*, (*i*)*latum*, *τολμάω*, &c. Its primary sense is 'bear up' or 'endure;' cp. l. 837 ὦ πολλὰ τλᾶσα καρδία. Often the notion of cruelty is involved, as in l. 275 μὴ τλῆς με προδοῦναι, i.e. 'have the heart to,' &c. The English 'bear' in its various senses exactly corresponds.

l. 2. θῆσσαν, 'menial,' cp. θῆσσαν ἐστίαν *Elect.* 204. Θῆσσα is the fem. of θῆς, and the *Thetes* were the lowest class in Solon's division of the Athenian citizens. The derivation is uncertain.

αἰνέσαι, 'to acquiesce in ;' properly 'to praise,' as when a man makes the most of his condition in words, when he cannot better it. Hence αἰνεῖν and *laudare* were colloquially used as a polite form of declining a thing, i.e. praising it in words to avoid giving offence. Cp. l. 525.

l. 3. Asclepius (Aesculapius) was the son of Phoebus by the nymph Coronis, and was taught the healing art by Chiron. Zeus was jealous of his power, which could even restore the dead (l. 128), as in the case of Hippolytus. Virgil refers to this in *Aen.* vii. 770—

'Tum pater omnipotens aliquem indignatus ab umbris  
Mortalem infernis ad lumina surgere vitae,  
Ipse repertorem medicinae talis et artis  
Fulmine Phoebigenam Stygias detrussit in undas.'

l. 5. οὗ, 'whereat,' the gen. of cause. Cp. ὅπλων χολωθείς Pindar, *Nem.* viii. 25. Or masc. 'for whose death.'

δή, 'of course,' as a natural result of such treatment.

τέκτονας, &c. Cp. Cic. *de Divin.* ii. 19 'non enim te puto esse eum, qui Jovi fulmen *fabricatos* esse Cyclopes in Aetna putes.' These were the three original Cyclopes, the sons of Heaven and Earth, Βρόντην τε Στερόπην τε καὶ Ἄργην ὀβριμόθυμον (Hesiod. *Theog.* 140). Later tradition added to their number and made them the servants of Hephaestus. Cp. Virg. *Aen.* viii. 424.

l. 7. ἄποινα. Cp. *Iph.* in *Tauris* 1458 ὅταν ἐορτάξῃ λεώς, τῆς σῆς σφαγῆς ἄποινα. These accusatives are said to be 'in apposition to the sentence,' i.e. to a noun implied in the verb, which might be expressed. Thus θητεύειν implies θητείαν, ἐορτάζειν implies ἐορτήν. Cp. *Orest.* 1105 Ἑλένην κτάνωμεν, Μενέλεω λύπην πικράν, Soph. *Aias* 559 νέαν ψυχὴν ἀτάλλων, μητρὶ τῇδε χαρμονήν.

l. 8. ἐβουφόρβουν. Cp. l. 572, *Tibull.* ii. 3. 11 'Pavit et Admeti tauros formosus Apollo.' The imperfects denote continuance. 'Ever since I came here, I have been keeping the herds and preserving my master.'

l. 9. ἐς τὸδ' ἡμέρας, also in *Phoenissae* 425. 'ἡμέρας is the partitive gen., lit. 'to this point of time,' like the Latin *ad hoc temporis*.

l. 10. ἐτύγχανον implies 'I had the luck to secure.' Cf. Aesch. *Suppl.* 151 μὴ τυχοῦσαι θεῶν, i.e. 'not securing their favour.' Also in a bad sense, as ἀνδρὸς ἀνοσίῳ τυχών *Bacchae* 613.

l. 11. θανεῖν = τοῦ θανεῖν, a substantival infinitive. Spenser has imitated this construction in the lines,

'For not to have been dipped in Lethe lake  
Could save the sonne of Thetis *from to die*.'

But he was probably not aware that *dying* is an infinitive as well as a participle, and the proper equivalent of τὸ θανεῖν.

1. 12. Μοίρας δολώσας. Cp. 1. 33. Aeschylus alludes to this in *Eumenides* 693, where the Furies charge Apollo with the deed—

Τοιαῦτ' ἔδρασας καὶ Φέρητος ἐν δόμοις,  
Μοίρας ἔπεισας ἀφθίτους θεῖναι βροτοὺς' . . .  
σύ τοι παλαιὰς διανομὰς καταφθίσας  
οἷνφ παρηπάτησας ἀρχαίας θεάς.

ἤνεσαν, 'promised,' lit. 'allowed me (this favour),' from the sense of 'acquiesce.' See 1. 2, n. and cp. 1. 525, *Med.* 1157 ἀλλ' ἤνεσ' ἀνδρὶ πάντα. So κατήνεσεν in *Soph. Oed. Col.* 432.

1. 13. Αἶδην, 'death,' as in *Hippol.* 1047 ταχὺς Αἶδης, *Aesch. Agam.* 650 Αἶδην πόντιον, and elsewhere.

1. 15. ἐλέγξας, 'questioning.' Cp. οὐδ' ἠλέγξας *Hippol.* 1322. Ἐλέγχειν is 'to put to the proof,' especially by questions to make a man contradict himself; hence the Socratic cross-questioning was called ἔλεγχος.

1. 17. ὅστις, 'anyone who,' therefore masc. [The MSS. read ἥτις.]

1. 18. κείνου, instead of αὐτοῦ, though it refers to the subject of ἤρε. When ἐκείνος is thus used it invests the person referred to with a special importance. So in 1. 357 κείνης πόσιν refers to κόρην just mentioned. Cp. *Xen. Anab.* 1. 8. 26 βασιλέα καὶ τὸ ἀμφ' ἐκείνον στίφος, *ib.* iv. 3. 20 Χειρίσσοφος καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐκείνῳ.

1. 19. ἐν χερσίν, sc. Ἀδμήτου, 'is borne in her husband's arms.' See 1. 201.

1. 21. θανεῖν καὶ μεταστῆναι βίου, a common tautology. *Aristophanes, Ranae* 1124, makes Euripides blame Aeschylus for a similar expression—

ἤκω γὰρ εἰς γῆν τήνδε καὶ κατέρχομαι (*Choeph.* 3),

since ἤκω and κατέρχομαι mean the same thing.

1. 22. The general belief in pollution caused by contact with the dead was shared by the Greeks with other ancient nations. (See the Mosaic enactments in *Numbers* xix. 11, &c.) The superstitious man in *Theophrastus* will not come near a corpse, saying τὸ μὴ μαινεσθαι συμφέρον αὐτῷ εἶναι. But in the case of the bright and pure deities, Phoebus and Artemis, such contact was especially to be avoided. Apollo might not even be invoked under circumstances of sorrow; hence in the *Agamemnon*, 1. 1041, the Chorus upbraids Cassandra for so doing, οὐ γὰρ τοιοῦτος ὥστε θρηνήτου τυχεῖν. In the *Hippolytus*, 1435, Artemis addresses the dying hero thus—

Καὶ χαῖρ', ἐμοὶ γὰρ οὐ θέμις φθιτοὺς ὄρᾶν,  
οὐδ' ὄμμα χραίνειν θανασίμοισιν ἐκπνοαῖς.

1. 25. ἱερῇ θανόντων. See 1. 74, where Thanatos appears as a sacrificing priest. The spirits of the dead were considered as malignant deities, who required propitiation by sacrifice. Cp. 1. 613 n.

1. 26. *συμμέτρως* = *εὐκαίρως*, 'punctual to his time;' lit. 'measuring' the time of his arrival so as to suit the day of her doom. Compare the use of *συμμετρῆν* by Thucydides, ii. 44, οἷς ἐνευδαιμονῆσαι τε ὁ βίος καὶ ἐντελευτῆσαι ξυνεμετρήθη, i. e. 'the duration of their happiness is commensurate with the end of their lives.'

Enter THANATOS, clad in black and with a drawn sword. He has probably come up by the *χαράνιοι κλίμακες* (a flight of steps leading up from a vault to the stage, to represent an ascent from Hades), and is now waiting near the door of the palace.

THANATOS (with a yell). 'Ha! what dost thou here, Phoebus? Wilt rob me of my due this second time?' APOLLO. 'Twas not by force I got thy other victim from thee, whose wife even now takes his place—she whom thou seekest.' TH. 'Aye, and I will have her too!' AP. 'Will you not take one of riper age?' TH. 'No, a youthful victim is a fairer prize.' AP. 'But if she dies old, think of the gorgeous funeral!' TH. 'That were a law for the rich, Phoebus, who would buy long life if they could.' AP. 'You won't oblige me then?' TH. 'Not I; you know my ways.' AP. 'Yes, detested by gods and men. But there is one coming who will tame you yet, and rob you of your prey; he is even now on his way hither.' TH. 'Talk away! I go to begin my sacrifice.'

1. 29. *πολεῖς*. Cp. *Orest.* 1268 τίς ὅδ' ἄρ' ἀμφὶ μέλαθρον πολεῖ; *Πολεῖν* (cp. *πέλω*, *πέλομαι*) denotes regular motion in and about a place, Lat. *versari*. So *πόλος* is 'a turning-point' or 'axis.' [The root is probably the same as in *col-ere*, *in-col-a*, &c. Some have suggested a connexion with *πολύς*, i. e. to be *much* in a place, but that is from a different root, *πλε-* 'full,' which appears in *πλέ-ων*, *πλη-θος*, *ple-nus*, *ple-bs*, &c.]

1. 30. αὖ. See 1. 32. *τιμάς*, 'prerogatives,' cp. 1. 53, *Hippol.* 107 *τιμαῖσι δαιμόνων*.

1. 31. *ἀφοριζόμενος* = *circumscribens*, lit. 'marking off' as one's own; not (as some explain it) 'carrying out of bounds,' i. e. 'carrying off.'

1. 33. *Μοίρας*, &c. Cp. 1. 12 note.

1. 35. *τοξήρη*, with *ὀπλίσας*. The adj. is 'proleptic,' i. e. marks the effect of the verb. Cp. *Soph. Oed. Col.* 1200 τῶν σὼν ἀδέρκτων ὀμμάτων τητῶμενος, *Virg. Aen.* iii. 237 'scuta latentia condunt.' See 1. 385 n.

1. 36. τόδε, explained by *προθανεῖν* in apposition. Cp. *Herc. Fur.* 303 ἀλλὰ καὶ τόδ' ἄθλιον, Πενία σὺν οἰκτρῇ περιβαλεῖν σωτηρίαν.

11. 38-63. The following dialogue is a specimen of 'word-fencing' and repartee, which an Athenian audience, accustomed to the daily wrangle of the law-courts, would thoroughly appreciate, however trifling and undignified it may appear to us. See Introduction, p. xiii.

1. 38. *θάρσει*, &c. = 'don't be alarmed;' 'be sure (τοι) I have justice and sound reason on my side.' Cp. the French *avoir raison*.

1. 39. ἔργον, 'need,' exactly = the Latin *opus est*.

1. 40. σύνηθες, &c. Cp. Hor. *Od.* iii. 4. 6 (of Apollo) 'nunquam humero positurus arcum,' also Hom. *Il.* i. 45 τόξ' ὤμοισιν ἔχων, ἀμφη-  
ρεφέα τε φαρέτρην.

1. 41. προσωφελεῖν, sc. σύνηθες. As Apollo is making a second attempt to rob Death of his prey, such interference is justly regarded as his 'custom.'

1. 42. γάρ, 'yes, for, &c.,' referring to προσωφελεῖν, but of course not admitting the ἐκδίκως. For γάρ in answers, requiring 'yes' or 'no' to be supplied from the context, cp. ll. 147, 823, 1081.

1. 44. ἀλλά, 'nay but,' a protest. Cp. Aristoph. *Acharn.* 408 (Dicaeopolis and Euripides). Dic. ἀλλ' ἐκκυκλήθητ'. Eur. ἀλλ' ἀδύνατον. Dic. ἀλλ' ὅμως. 'Nay, but do turn out!' 'Nay, 'tis impossible.' 'Nay but do!'

1. 46. ἀμείψας, 'having given in exchange,' 'substituted.' Ἀμείβειν means either 'to give' or 'take in exchange.' See note on l. 462.

ἦν μέτα, *anastrophe* for μεθ' ἦν (hence the accent goes back a syllable on μέτα), 'after whom,' i. e. 'in quest of whom.' Cp. ll. 66, 483.

1. 48. οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' ἄν, &c. (also in *Med.* 941) = οὐκ οἶδα εἰ πείσαιμι ἄν, the ἄν being out of its proper place. Εἰ ἄν with the opt. marks a second implied condition, besides the one expressed by the dependent clause; thus in Plato, *Protag.* ch. 17 εἴπερ ἄλλω τῷ πειθοίμην ἄν, = 'if I were to believe anyone else (supposing he were to say so).' So here οὐκ οἶδα, &c. = 'I am not sure whether I could persuade you (if I tried).'

1. 49. ὃν ἄν χρῆ, i. e. 'the proper person.' Death is purposely ambiguous; in the next line Apollo declares his own views as to who are Death's 'proper' victims.

τοῦτο, a cognate accus. = ταύτην τὴν τάξιν.

1. 50. τοῖς μέλλουσι = those who will die in the natural course of things, i. e. the old. Cp. δ μέλλων l. 527. Or 'those who linger on' to old age. Death personified is said θάνατον ἐμβαλεῖν, as at once the cause and the effect. Cp. *Iph. in Aul.* 775 Ἄρης . . . κυκλώσας ἄρει φονίῳ, Aesch. *Choeph.* 32 φόβος . . . ἔλακε περὶ φόβῳ. So Milton, *Nativity Hymn*, 51, has 'Peace . . . strikes a universal peace through sea and land,' and in *P. L.* x. 269, Death is said to 'draw . . . the savour of death' from all living things.

1. 51. ἔχω, 'I understand,' just as we say 'I have it.' Cp. *Orest.* 1120 ἔχω τοσοῦτον. So in Ter. *Heaut.* iv. 3. 22 'tenes quod dicam?' In l. 1107 ἔχω προθυμίαν has its usual sense = πρόθυμός εἰμι.

1. 52. For μόλοι, the opt., we should expect μόλη, the subj., after the primary tense οὐκ ἔστι. But the opt. is used to express something farther removed from possibility. 'Is there absolutely no chance, &c.?'

Cp. 1. 117 οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅποι . . . παραλύσαι, Aesch. *Agam.* 620 οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως λέξαιμι τὰ ψευδῇ καλὰ, on which see Mr. Sidgwick's note, Appendix I.

1. 53. τιμαῖς. Cp. 1. 30 n. In the *Bacchae* 321 Tiresias says of Dionysus κάκεῖνος, οἶμαι, τέρπεται τιμώμενος. Cp. *Hippol.* 7, 8—

ἐνεσσι γὰρ δὴ κὰν θεῶν γένει τόδε  
τιμώμενοι χαίρουσιν ἀνθρώπων ὕπο.

The whole theory of sacrifice proceeds upon this assumption.

1. 55. μῆζον, i. e. 'more valuable' than in the case of one who must soon die in the course of nature (1. 50). In the next few lines both disputants purposely misunderstand each other. Apollo says that if Alcestis lives to be old, she will still have a rich funeral (as befits her station), as if this were the 'prize' that Death desired. Death retorts by professing to understand him to refer to rich people generally, whereas Phoebus had spoken only of Alcestis. Hence he is twitted with 'captiousness' by his opponent for misinterpreting him. At 1. 60 Apollo abruptly returns to the point in dispute.

1. 57. πρὸς τῶν ἔχόντων, 'in the interest of the rich.' Πρὸς is literally 'from the point of view of,' i. e. 'on the side of.' For οἱ ἔχοντες = πλούσιοι, cp. Soph. *Aias* 157 πρὸς τὸν ἔχονθ' ὁ φθόνος ἔρπει.

1. 58. λέληθας, &c., i. e. 'I did not think you were such a sophist,' i. e. 'so clever.' See above on 1. 55. For σοφός in this sense cp. *Med.* 296 παῖδας περισσῶς ἐκδιδάσκεσθαι σοφούς. Euripides is very fond of this word and its cognates σοφία, &c.; he uses them on all occasions in every shade of meaning, from wisdom to mere cunning. Aristophanes often applies the epithet σοφός to Euripides himself, of course depreciatingly or ironically—e. g. in *Nubes* 1377, *Ranae* 1413, *Lysist.* 368.

1. 59. ὠνοῖντ' ἄν, &c., 'they who had the means would purchase length of days.' Another reading, of good authority, is ὄναιντ' ἄν, 'they would be benefited (or have the best of it), who could afford to purchase delay' (Paley). Either will make good sense. With the former cp. Cardinal Beaufort's dying exclamation, Shaksp. *Hen. VI.* 2nd Part, iii. 3:

'If thou be'st death, I'll give thee England's treasure,

So thou wilt let me live and feel no pain.'

[For γηραιούς some read γηραιοί. The former means that they would buy it for their friends, the latter for themselves (the subject of the sentence).]

1. 63. ἃ μῆ = 'whatever,' i. e. 'you can't have *everything* that you have no right to,' implying that he does manage to get a great deal.

1. 64. ἦ μὴν, 'be sure however.' Μὴν is lengthened from μέν, hence ἦ μὴν is a strong form of asseveration, used in oaths, &c.

παύσει, here almost passive, 'you will *have*' or '*be made* to stop.' See 1. 322 n.

1. 65. τοῖος, i. e. 'so strong a man.' Cp. οἷός τέ εἰμι, 'I am able' or equal to the task.

1. 66. μέτα. Cp. l. 46 note. For the object of Heracles' expedition see ll. 481, &c.

1. 70. ἡ χάρις, 'the thanks' you would get from me if you gave up Alcestis now.

1. 71. δράσεις ὁμοίως, 'you will have to do it all the same,' i. e. surrender your victim. Euripides avails himself of Apollo's prophetic insight to give his audience a hint of what is coming.

1. 72. ἂν λέξας = εἰ λέξεις, 'if you talk ever so much.' Cp. the phrase πόλλ' ἂν ἔχων εἰπεῖν, 'though I could say much.' [In l. 490 τί δ' ἂν κρατήσας δεσπότην πλέον λάβοις; the single ἂν belongs to λάβοις, but reflects its conditional force upon κρατήσας also.]

1. 73. ἡ δ' οὖν, 'the lady I say.' Οὖν, said to be from ἔδν, part. of εἰμί (but Ionic ὦν is against this derivation), means 'as a matter of fact,' 'really,' often 'of course,' as in Plat. *Phaedr.* xx. εἰ δ' ἔστιν ὥσπερ οὖν ἔστι. Its common meaning 'therefore' is derived from this.

1. 74. Here Death appears as a sacrificing priest. See on l. 25. A tuft of hair was cut from the victim's head, and thrown into the fire as firstfruits (*primitiae*) of the sacrifice. Hence the technical term *κατάρχεσθαι*, as in Aristoph. *Aves* 959 *μὴ κατάρξῃ τοῦ τράγου*. Cp. Virg. *Aen.* vi. 243:

'Et summas carpens media inter cornua setas

Ignibus imponit sacris, *libamina prima*.'

In *Aen.* iv. 698 Proserpine performs the same function:

'Nondum illi flavum Proserpina vertice crinem

Abstulerat, Stygioque caput sacraverat Orco.'

1. 75. ἱερός, 'devoted to,' with possessive gen. as in Soph. *Philoct.* 943 *ἱερὰ τοῦ Ζήνους*. Cp. Cic. in *Verrem* ii. 18 'insula eorum Deorum *sacra* putatur.'

1. 76. οὔτου . . . ἀγνίση. It has been said, by way of distinction, that the omission of ἂν makes the statement rather less indefinite than it would otherwise be,—'that man is sacred . . . whose head, &c.' But as a general statement (which the subjunctive implies) must be more or less indefinite, the practical difference is very slight, if not altogether imaginary. The ἂν is commonly omitted in Homer, often in tragedy, as in l. 978 *Ζεὺς ὃ τι νέυσῃ*, *Med.* 516 *ὃς κίβδηλος ᾖ*. In Attic prose this omission is confined to a few doubtful instances.

*Exeunt APOLLO and THANATOS.*

ll. 77-III. This is the *Parodos* or 'entrance-song' of the CHORUS, sung while advancing to their places in the orchestra. The metre is anapaestic, suited to a slow and solemn march. At ll. 93, 105 they divide into two sections (*ἡμιχόρια*) and again, at l. 112, join in an ode of lamentation (to l. 136).



CHORUS. 'What means this silence? Is our lady still alive? At least there is no sign or sound of mourning; all may not be over;—is there yet hope? Ah no! the fatal day is surely come; let us mourn with our king. No power can save her now; prayers and sacrifice alike are vain. Phoebus' son alone could rescue her, but he, alas! is dead, slain by the bolt of Zeus; there is no remedy.

But here comes one of the handmaidens of the house; I would fain learn the truth from her.'

l. 80. φθιμένην, emphatic, 'to mourn as dead.'

[l. 82. Many editions insert τόδε, probably an interpolation to complete the metre. Placed after φῶς it violates the rule (which however has its exceptions, as in *Hippol.* 1360, *Phoen.* 816, &c.) that the second foot in an anapaestic dimeter should end a word. Hence Kirchhoff puts τόδε after Πελίου.]

l. 88. ὡς πεπραγμένων, 'as if all were over.' Cp. *Hippol.* 680 φεῦ, φεῦ, πέπρακται, Lat. *actum est*.

l. 89. οὐ μὲν οὐδέ, 'yet on the other hand,' &c. The Chorus waver between hope and fear, and interpret the doubtful signs accordingly. 'There is no sound or voice of woe,' so far well; 'but neither is any attendant stationed at the gates,' which seems to indicate that some great sorrow keeps them within.

l. 91. εἰ φανείης, equivalent to a wish. Cp. l. 1072 εἰ γὰρ εἶχον, Aristoph. *Equites* 662 αἱ τριχίδες εἰ γενοίαιθ' ἑκατὸν τοῦβολοῦ. So in Latin *o si=utinam*, as in Persius *Sat.* ii. 10 'O si ebulliat patruus, praeclarum funus.' The γάρ indicates a reason why the wish may not be hopeless, since on the whole the signs are favourable.

μετακύμιος ᾄτης, 'between the waves of our distress,' to save us from being overwhelmed by them. Cp. μεταίχμιον, 'the space between two armies.'

l. 92. Παιάν, an attribute of Apollo as the Healer or averter of evil (l. 220, &c.), but originally, as in Homer, a distinct deity. For the meanings of Παιάν see l. 424 n.

l. 94. οὐ δῆ, &c. 'At any rate (γε) she has not been carried out' for burial. The former speaker had adduced the silence in the house as a proof that Alcestis was not dead, the answer accepts the evidence as valid; since, if the funeral procession had left, the house would of course be deserted. [The words νέκυσ ἤδη, usually placed after οἴκων, have been suspected as a gloss to supply a noun with φροῦδος. The Scholiast explains the line οὐ γὰρ ἔλαθεν ἡμᾶς προκομισθεῖσα. But the objection that νέκυσ ἤδη would be a false quantity will not hold, for the -us is sometimes short, as in l. 599 νέκυν ἐν δώμασιν. The difficulty is removed by making νέκυσ ἤδη precede this line.]

l. 95. πόθεν, &c. 'Why so? I am not so sure of it. What makes

you confident?' But some assign each sentence to a separate semichorus, in which case *πόθεν* will mean 'certainly not' (*minime*) and *οὐκ αὐχῶ* will express hesitation on the part of the first speaker, 'I do not say so positively.' See note on *αὐχέϊς* l. 675. [There is some uncertainty about the arrangement of the whole passage, since the number of lines in the *strophe* (86-97) and *antistrophe* (98-111) is not equal. But perhaps, as Paley observes, the anapaestic lines (93-97 and 105-111) 'are not included in the antithetical arrangement.']

l. 96. *πῶς ἄν* = a negative, i.e. 'Admetus would *never* have made,' &c. Cp. the colloquial phrases *πῶς γάρ*; *πῶς γὰρ οὐ*; For the double *ἄν* cp. 464, 474, Soph. *Oed. Tyr.* 772 *πῶς ἄν ποτ' ἀφικοίμην ἄν*; and see note on l. 647.

*ἔρημον*, i.e. without mourners. So *δίκη ἐρήμη* was a suit in which one of the parties failed to appear.

l. 99. *πηγαῖον*, &c. A vessel of spring water (*ὄστρακον* or *ἀρδάνιον*) fetched from another house, was placed at the door, for those who entered to sprinkle themselves, to avoid pollution from the corpse (l. 22 n.). Cp. Aristoph. *Eccles.* 1033 *ὑδατος δὲ κατάθου τοῦστρακον πρὸ τῆς θύρας*.

l. 101. *χαίτα . . . τομαῖος*, &c., should mean 'no clipped hair before the doors,' but there seems to be no evidence of such a custom beyond the present passage. In the *Supplices* 972 (*παιδὸς δ' ἐν οἴκοις κείται μνάματα πένθιμοι κουραὶ καὶ στέφανοι κόμας*) the hair is kept simply as a 'memorial' of the departed, and the line quoted by Monk from Aesch. *Choeph.* 166 *ὄρῳ τομαῖον τόνδε βόστρυχον τάφῳ* illustrates the well-known custom of placing a lock of hair upon the tomb. [Another reading is *χαίτας τομαῖος*, i.e. 'no one with shorn hair,' a common sign of mourning. Cp. ll. 215, 427.]

l. 103. *πίπτει*, 'happens,' *accidit*. So 'fall' in English = 'befal,' 'as it fell upon a day.'

*νεολαία χεῖρ γυναικῶν* = *χεῖρ νέων γυναικῶν*, by an inversion of the adj. See l. 1059 n. and cp. *γραιάς ὅσων πηγὰς Herc. Fur.* 450, *λευκοπήχεις κτύπους χεροῖν Phoen.* 1351. *νεολαία* is here an adjective, though elsewhere a substantive, as in Theocr. *Idyll.* xviii. 24 *θῆλυς νεολαία*. But the reading is uncertain.

l. 104. *δουπεῖ* expresses a dull heavy sound or 'thud.' Cp. Soph. *Aias* 631 *χερόπληκτοι δ' ἐν στέρνοισι πεσοῦνται δουποῖ*.

l. 105. *καὶ μὴν*, &c., 'and yet this is the appointed day.' See l. 26. Herodotus v. 50 has *ἡ κυρία ἡμέρη*. [Some editions interpolate *δή* after *τόδε* and *καί* before *τί* in the next line to complete the metre.]

l. 107. For *χρῆν* others read *χρή*. But the impf. refers back to the time when the decree went forth; 'on which she *was to have* gone,' &c.

l. 109. διακναιομένων, 'wearing away,' i. e. either with sorrow, referring to Admetus and the family, or with disease, referring to Alcestis. Probably the latter, cp. l. 203. Aeschylus, *Prom.* 94, has αἰκίασιν διακναιομένος. The primary sense of κναίω (κνάω, κνάπτω, &c.) is 'to scrape,' hence 'wear away' as by a lingering malady. Prof. Paley understands it of life suddenly cut short, quoting Aesch. *Agam.* 65 διακναιομένης ἐν προτελείοις κάμακος. But this need not literally mean 'snapt short,' but 'shivered' or 'splintered,' from the original sense of the word.

ll. 112-135. The Chorus having now taken their places combine to chant the *stasimon* or 'stationary ode.' The burden of it is the utter hopelessness of saving the queen's life now.

l. 113. ὅποι αἶας = *quo terrarum*. Λυκίας is in the same construction, though Euripides does not mean 'to what part of Lycia,' but 'to what part of the world, whether Lycia or Libya.'

[Hence Monk reads Λυκίαν, without MS. authority. Some take Λυκίας as an adj. with ἔδρας, the prep. ἐπί being put with the second noun; cp. *Phoen.* 291 μαντεῖα σεμνὰ Λοξίου τ' ἐπ' ἐσχάρας. This is a possible construction, but the former is to be preferred.]

The Lycian shrine of Apollo was at Patara (*Hor. Od.* iii. 4. 61), where he was said to dwell in winter, hence 'hibernam Lyciam,' *Virg. Aen.* iv. 143.

l. 115. ἥ . . . εἴτε instead of ἡ . . . ἥ. Cp. *Soph. Aias* 176 ἥ ῥὰ κλυτῶν ἐνάρων ψευσθεῖσ', ἀδώροις εἴτ' ἐλαφροβολαῖς; also, with the order reversed, *Iph. in Tauris* 272 εἴτ' οὖν ἐπ' ἀκταῖς θάσσετον Διοσκόρω, ἥ Νηρέως ἀγάλαματα.

ἀνύδρους . . . ἔδρας. Cp. *Electra* 732 ξηραὶ τ' Ἀμμωνίδος ἔδραι . . . ἀπειρόδροσοι. The temple of Jupiter Ammon was on an oasis in the Libyan desert. Arrian describes the surrounding district as πάντα ἔρημα καὶ ἀνυδρα, but 'a small spot in the midst is full of trees, and a fountain springs from it, which is cold at midday, but gets hotter as the sun goes down.' Cp. *Lucan, Pharsalia* ix. 527—

'Solus nemus extulit Ammon.

Silvarum fons causa loco, qui putria terrae

Alligat, et domitas unda connectit arenas.'

l. 117. παραλύσαι. The opt. after a verb in a primary tense (ἔστι) implies absolute impossibility. See note on l. 52, and add reference to Aesch. *Prom.* 292 οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτφ μείζονα μοῖραν νείμαιμ' ἢ σοί.

l. 118. ἀπότομος, 'inexorable' (cp. l. 982), lit. 'precipitous,' Lat. *abruptus*, like the Homeric αἰπὺν ὄλεθρον, 'sheer destruction.'

l. 119. ἐπ' ἐσχάrais, after *μηλοθύταν*.

l. 120. The hiatus in ἔχω ἐπί is an Epic licence admissible in choral odes. Cp. *Soph. Aias* 349 μόνοι ἐμῶν φίλων.

1. 122. ἦν δεδορκώς = ἐδεδόρκει, but lays greater stress on the predicate = 'had been alive and seen.' Cp. *Iph. in Taur.* 133 ἦμεν ἡμενοί, *Soph. Aias* 1320 κλύοντες ἐσμέν, *Hdt.* iii. 76 στείχοντες ἐγένοντο. This 'analytic' form is specially used in the pluperf., a comparatively rare tense in Greek.

1. 125. ἦλθεν. Observe the change of subject from Asclepius to Alcestis, 'she would have come,' instead of 'he would have fetched her.'

[1. 126. The MSS. reading Ἄϊδα τε πύλας, does not correspond with the strophic line 117. Dindorf adds καί and Hermann substituted πυλῶνας. Many adopt Monk's reading Ἄϊδαο, with Ἀμμωνίδας in the strophe, l. 116. The Epic genitive occurs in *Electra* 468 ἀελίοιο, *Troades* 844 Πριάμοιο, and elsewhere. 'Gates of Hades' is also a regular Homeric phrase (*Il.* xxiii. 71, &c.). Cp. *Med.* 1231, and σκότου πύλας *Hec.* 1.]

1. 127. δμαθέντας, sc. θανάτω. Cp. *Troad.* 175 καὶ ζῶντες καὶ δμαθέντες. Mr. Browning in *Balaustion* translates 'Death's subdued ones.'

1. 131. προσδέχωμαι, the 'deliberative' subj. 'am I to expect.' Cp. *ll.* 215, 864. The singular verb shows that the leader of the Chorus is speaking. So ἐμοί l. 83.

1. 132. τετέλεσται, i.e. 'all due rites have been performed,' from τέλος = 'religious ceremony.' βασιλεῦσιν refers to Admetus alone; the plural indicates dignity, and is part of the 'royal style' (like *we, our, &c.*, in addresses from the throne). Cp. δεσπόταισι l. 138, κοιράνοισι l. 216. Aristotle, *Rhet.* iii. 6, says εἰς ὄγκον τῆς λέξεως συμβάλλεται τὸ ἐν πολλὰ ποιεῖν. [But the metre here is faulty.]

1. 134. αἰμόρραντοι for αἱματορραντοι, formed from the original root, instead of from the noun stem of αἷμα (as in αἱματο-σταγής, &c.). Cp. κυμοδέγμονος *Hippol.* 1173.

πληρεῖς, &c. Not perhaps an inversion for βῶμοι θυσιῶν πληρεῖς, but in the sense of 'complete' or 'abundant,' like Homer's τελεήσας ἐκατόμβας. So in *Helena* 1411 χάριν πλήρη λαβεῖν. Cp. the expression in our Prayer Book 'a full, perfect sacrifice.'

1. 135. From this line to l. 434 is the first Episode (ἐπίσοδος), the name given to all that portion of a play which comes between two Choral odes.

Enter HANDMAID. *LI.* 138-212. CHORUS. 'Is your mistress still living?' MAID. 'She is hovering between life and death, and there is no hope; her funeral attire is ready.' CHO. 'A glorious death will be hers, the best of woman-kind!' MAID. 'Ay, the best indeed! But hear how she prepared to meet her doom. Having bathed herself in pure water, she put on festal attire, and prayed for her children, first before

the hearth, then at each household altar; all without tear or groan. At last, entering the nuptial chamber, she gave full vent to her grief, watering the couch with a flood of tears. Her children clung to her weeping; the servants also wept, while to each one she gave her hand and spoke a kind farewell. Such a woe, worse than death, has Admetus to bear. Even now he clasps her in his arms, beseeching her not to leave him; but she is fast wearing away, and with wistful eye is taking farewell of the sun. But I will announce thy friendly coming to my master.'

l. 138. πενθεῖν, &c., addressed to the servant. εἴ τι τυγχάνει, an euphemism for some great calamity. Cp. Latin 'si quid acciderit,' just as we say 'if anything happens.' δεσπόταισι, cp. l. 132 n.

l. 140. οὖν marks an anticipated event, 'as we fear' (Major).

l. 141. Cp. l. 521 ἔστιν τε κούκέρ' ἔστιν, also *Phoenissae* 357 φρονῶν εἶ κού φρονῶν ἀφικόμην. Euripides was fond of these verbal paradoxes (ἀντιλόγαι), and his audience could appreciate them. Aristophanes ridicules them in a famous scene of the *Acharnians* 396 &c., where Dicaeopolis enquiring at the door whether Euripides is at home, gets the answer οὐκ ἔνδον ἔνδον ἔστίν, meaning that his mind was abroad, though his body was indoors.

l. 142. καὶ πῶς, 'but how,' or 'and pray how,' &c., indicating surprise or objection. Καί marks a continuation of thought, which now breaks forth in words. When the καί stands second, it merely introduces a further question, and means 'also,' as ποῦ καί l. 832. [This distinction does not always hold good; e.g. in l. 482 καὶ ποῖ simply continues the conversation, so καὶ ποῖ in Aesch. *Choeph.* 528, and καὶ πότε in l. 524 of the same play.]

l. 143. προνωπής, 'sinking,' *prona*, i.e. *moribunda*. For its literal meaning see l. 186.

l. 144. οἷας οἷος ὦν, &c. = οἷος εἴ καὶ οἷας, &c., a condensed expression, the force of which can only be given by a paraphrase; e.g.—'What a fate for one so noble to lose so precious a wife!' Cp. Soph. *Aias* 557 οἷος ἐξ οἷου ἑράφης = 'the character of thy sire reflected in thine own.'

l. 145. πάθῃ. The subjunctive is the regular construction after the pres. οἶδε. 'He knows not her worth before the blow comes.' [But there is good MS. authority for the opt. πάθοι. This would refer back to the thought as conceived in the speaker's mind, 'he knows it not, nor could he be expected to know it, before the blow came.']

l. 146. ἔλπις μὲν, &c., 'hope then there is none,' &c., 'spes, ut videtur, nulla est.' Cp. *Med.* 674 θέμυς μὲν ἡμᾶς χρησμὸν εἶδέναι θεοῦ; = 'I take it for granted we may learn,' &c. Lit. 'one thing at least is certain.' See on l. 64.

l. 149. κόσμος. Cp. ll. 161, 613; *Herc. Fur.* 442, 703; *Ion* 26 ἀλλ' ἦν ἥλθεν παρθένος χλιδὴν, τέκνῳ προσάψας' ἔλιπεν, ὥς θανουμένην. By κόσμος is meant not only an article of dress (ἔσθητα l. 161) but especially gold ornaments, of which many specimens have been found in ancient tombs. The phrase ἀναθήματα νεκροῖς, *Supplices* 983, points to the origin of this custom, i.e. the desire of propitiating the θεοὶ νέρτεροι (l. 25). For the whole ceremony see *Dict. of Antiquities*, under FUNUS.

l. 150. ἴστω, &c., 'let her know that she,' &c. Cp. ἴστω πορεύσας l. 438. Verbs denoting knowledge, perception, &c., are regularly followed by a participle instead of the infin. as in Latin. If the part. refers to the subject of the sentence, it stands in the nom. case by 'attraction,' otherwise in the accus., as οἶδα ὦν but οἶδά σε ὄντα. Virgil has imitated this construction in *Aen.* ii. 377 'Sensit medios delapsus in hostes.' So with other verbs, as φαίνομαι, δείκνυμαι, &c. Cp. l. 154 below.

l. 151. μακρῷ, 'by far,' with ἀρίστη, but put at the end of the sentence for emphasis. Cp. *Bacchae* 1234 πάντων ἀρίστας θυγατέρας σπείραι μακρῷ.

l. 152. πῶς οὐκ, &c. = 'of course she is,' &c. Cp. l. 92 n. These quick interrogative forms of expression were well suited to the liveliness of the Greek temperament.

l. 153. ὑπερβεβλημένην, 'who has surpassed her;' metaphor from an arrow shot beyond the mark (Paley). The force of the perfect is 'who has been found to surpass her,' *quae superaverit?*

l. 154. ἐνδείξαιτο προτιμῶσα. Cp. *Bacch.* 45 θεὸς γεγῶς ἐνδείξομαι, *Med.* 548 δείξω πρῶτα μὲν σοφὸς γεγῶς. For the participial construction see l. 150 n.

With the sentiment of these lines cp. St. John xv. 13.

l. 156. ταῦτα, i.e. the general fact, as distinguished from the details about to be related.

πᾶσα πόλις (without the article) should mean 'every city' according to rule, and would imply that the fame of Alcestis had travelled beyond Pherae. But it probably means 'the whole city,' πόλις being considered as a sort of proper noun, which would not take the art., e.g. πᾶσαι Φεραί. So πᾶσα γῆ = 'the whole earth.' Otherwise πᾶς for πᾶς ὁ is confessedly rare. Even in the New Testament πᾶσα οἰκοδομή, 'the whole building,' is perhaps a solitary instance. δῆ, 'of course,' cp. l. 68 n.

l. 158. κυρίαν. Cp. κύριον ἡμαρ l. 105.

ll. 160, 161. ἐλούσατο. So Socrates washed himself before drinking the hemlock. (Plato *Phaedo* ch. lxxv.) Cp. *Soph. Oed. Col.* 1597, &c., where Oedipus preparing for death 'put off his travel-stained garments, and bade his daughters bring water from the flowing stream. . . . This done they bathed him therein, and arrayed him in fresh apparel, as is

the custom' (*ib.* 1602). The washing was of course part of the usual ceremony of purification; for the 'robes and ornaments' see l. 149 n. According to Lucian, *De Luctu*, one reason for the latter practice was that the body might not be cold on its passage to Hades. So in the strange story told by Herodotus v. 92, the spirit of Melissa, wife of Periander, complains that she was cold, because the garments buried with her had not first been burnt, and therefore were of no use to her.

δόμων, 'chests' or 'wardrobes,' made of cedar to keep out moths and damp. Cp. Hom. *Il.* xxiv. 191—

αὐτὸς δ' εἰς θάλαμον κατεβήσατο κηῶντα  
κέδρινον ὑπόροφον, δς γλήνεα πολλὰ κεχάνδει.

[Δόμος, from δέμ-ω = anything built or constructed; Lat. 'dom-us,' Eng. 'tim-ber.' In Hesiod *Works and Days* 96 δόμοισιν means 'a jar.']

l. 163. δέσποινα. This may have been either Hestia (Vesta), whose altar stood in the innermost part (μυχοί) of the house, or Artemis, who was both the patron goddess of Pherae (Callimachus *Hymn. ad Dianam* 259), and, in the character of Ilithyia (Hor. *Carm. Sec.* 14), presided over marriage (l. 166). The words πρόσθεν ἐστίας prove nothing, since the altars of patron deities stood near the hearth; thus in *Med.* 396 we find Medea addressing Hecate as μυχοῖς ναίουσας ἐστίας ἐμῆς. The title δέσποινα was especially given to Persephone, but her authority appears to have been confined to the nether world.

l. 165. τέκνα. Their names were Eumelus (l. 394) and Perimele. The former commanded his father's forces before Troy (Hom. *Il.* ii. 712), and was one of those who bore the distinctive title ἀναξ ἀνδρῶν (*ib.* xxiii. 288).

l. 166. σύζευξον. The imperat. is thrown in, as it were, between the two infinitives ὀφρανεῦσαι and θανεῖν, which depend upon αἰτήσομαι. The interchange of these two moods is not uncommon. Cp. Aristoph. *Ranae* 385 συμπαρασάττει, καὶ σώζε τὸν σαντῆς χορόν... παῖσαι τε καὶ χορεύσαι.

l. 167. ἡ τεκοῦσα is here a substantive = *parens*, hence followed by the gen. αὐτῶν. Cp. *Elect.* 333 ὁ κείνου τεκόν.

l. 170. οἷ, &c., sc. εἰσὶ. Cp. Hom. *Od.* xx. 298 αἱ κατὰ δώματ' Ὀδυσσῆος θέλοιο. The verb is not regularly omitted in relative clauses, and the more usual construction would be τοὺς, with ὄντας expressed or understood.

l. 171. ἐξέστεψε. So Dido before ascending the funeral pile 'intenditque locum sertis et fronde coronat funerea' Virg. *Aen.* iv. 506.

l. 172. μυρσίνης φόβην. Cp. *Ion* 120 μυρσίνας ἱερὰν φόβαν. [Others read μυρσινῶν or μυρσίνων (adj.), but μυρσίνης has best authority.] The myrtle was used at funerals as well as at banquets (l. 759). Cp. *Elect.* 512 τύμβῳ ἀμφέθηκα μυρσίνας. So Milton, *Lycidas* 2,



speaks of plucking the 'myrtles brown' in memory of his deceased friend.

ἀποσχίζουσα (pres.) 'plucking *all the while*.'

1. 173. ἄκλαυστος, ἀστένακτος, transitive as in Hom. *Od.* iv. 493 οὐδέ σέ φημι δὴν ἄκλαυστον ἔσεσθαι. So ἀδάκρυτος, &c. [In Soph. *Antig.* 847 φίλων ἄκλαυστος means 'unwept by friends.']

1. 175. θάλαμον, &c., 'bursting *into* the chamber and falling *upon* the couch,' from the double sense of εἰσπίπτειν. Monk cites Virg. *Aen.* iv. 650 'incubuitque toro dixitque novissima verba.'

1. 176. ἐνταῦθα δῆ, *tum demum*, 'then at last,' or 'then' (with emphasis).

1. 177. Cp. the dying address of Deianira to the bed of Heracles, Soph. *Trach.* 920—

ὦ λέχη τε καὶ νυμφεῖ' ἐμά,  
τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδη χαίρεθ', ὥς ἔμ' οὔποτε  
δέξεσθ' ἔτ' ἐν κοίταισι ταῖσδ' εὐνητρίαν.

1. 178. κορεύματα, &c. = 'I resigned my maidenhood,' but ἔλυσσα refers to the removal of the virgin zone after marriage. Cp. Hom. *Od.* xi. 245 λῦσε δὲ παρθενίην ζώνην. ἐκ, 'at the hands of,' i.e. 'by marriage with.' For the use of ἐκ to denote the agent, instead of ὑπό, cp. Soph. *Oed. Tyr.* 1454 ἵν' ἐξ ἐκείνων, οἳ μ' ἀπαλλύτην, θάνω. It is common in Herodotus.

περί, for the more usual ὑπέρ (l. 284), or πρό (l. 18), 'for whose sake.' So ἀμύνεσθαι περὶ πάτρης, &c., in Homer.

1. 179. ἀλώλεσας, &c., i.e. 'you have destroyed me, but you will destroy no other woman,' for no one will do for a husband what I have done for him. Her marriage with Admetus, symbolised by the nuptial couch, had cost Alcestis her life. [Others translate ἀλώλεσας, 'you have lost,' understanding μόνην to mean 'me and not Admetus as well,' because he might retrieve the nuptial couch by a second marriage, whereas Alcestis would never have married again had Admetus died. But the clause which suggests this, σέ δ' ἄλλη, &c., is not in immediate connexion with the present one, and the explanatory clause προδοῦναι γάρ, &c., favours the former interpretation.]

1. 182. σώφρων, &c., 'one more fortunate perhaps, but none more true.' For σώφρων in its distinctive sense as denoting conjugal fidelity cp. *Med.* 912 γυναικὸς ἔργα σώφρονος, *Elect.* 1099 σώφρονα λέχη.

οὐκ ἂν = ἥτις οὐκ ἂν εἴη. Ἄν without a verb gives the sense of likelihood. Cp. Plato, *Rep.* ix. ch. 4 τῶν δυνατῶν ἂν κρίναι, 'those who are likely to be good judges.' This line is parodied by Aristophanes *Equites* 1251 κλέπτῃς μὲν οὐκ ἂν μάλλον, εὐτυχὴς δ' ἴσως.

1. 184. πλημμυρίδι, properly the 'flood tide.' Aeschylus uses it of a gush of tears in *Choeph.* 186—



## ALCESTIS.

ἐξ ὀμμάτων δὲ δάψιοι πίπτουσί μοι  
σταγόνες ἄφαρκτοι δυσχίμου πλημμυρίδος.

1. 186. *προνωπής*, 'bending forward.' Cp. 1. 143 for the word in a derived sense.

1. 187. *πόλλ' ἐπεστράφη*, 'often returned to.' Cp. *Hel.* 83 *πῶθεν γῆς τῇσδ' ἐπεστράφης πέδον*, also *Ion* 352 *πόλλ' ἐπεστράφη πέδον*, unless the meaning there be 'roamed o'er the plain.'

1. 194. *κακός*, 'vile,' in station, as in Shaksp. *Hen. V.* iv. 3 'be he ne'er so *vile*, this day shall gentle his condition.' Cp. *Hom. Od.* vi. 119 *ἔσθλοῖς ἤδὲ κακοῖσιν* = 'high and low.' Originally these terms denoted warlike excellence or the reverse, without any reference to morals, or even to birth and station, except in so far as 'goodness' of every kind was presumed to accompany nobility (cp. 1. 601). This is one of the passages in which Euripides shews his sympathy with slaves, and a desire to improve their despised condition. Cp. *Med.* 54. *Orest.* 870, *Ion* 854-856.

1. 195. *προσερρήθη*, sc *ὕφ' οὗ* from *ὅν* preceding. 'She spake not to, nor had an answer from' (Browning).

1. 197. The meaning is, 'if he had died, he would have perished outright, but now that he has escaped death, he will have a lifelong sorrow.' It is uncertain whether we should read *τ' ἄν* (= *τε ἄν*) or *τᾶν* (= *τοὶ ἄν*). Δέ following *τε* marks the latter statement as more important by contrast with the former, 'whereas now he has,' &c. *Τε...* *τε* merely connect two parallel clauses, 'both . . . and.'

1. 198. *οὐποθ' οὐ*, &c. 'which he will never forget.' The MSS. reading is *οὐ ποτ' οὐ*, but the inversion for *οὐ ποτε* is seemingly without parallel. The reading in text (Nauck), however, involves a transposition of the relative pronoun. Monk takes *οὐ λελήσεται* = *μεμνήσεται*, = 'will ever remember,' but *ποτέ* cannot mean 'ever' in the sense of 'always.' See on *οὐποτε φήσω* 1. 238.

1. 199. *ἤ που*, 'surely,' or 'I presume' (often ironical). *Που* is 'some-where,' hence *ἤ που* = 'surely I have some grounds for what I say.'

1. 200. *εἰ*, with indic., instead of the direct *ὅτι*, 'if' (as is the case) = 'since.'

1. 202. *προδοῦναι*, 'to abandon him,' *deserere*, as in ll. 250, 275.

1. 204. *παρειμένη*, 'paralysed' or 'fainting.' Elmsley first suggested a lost line after this one; others put no stop after *νόσφ*, and read *γε* for *δέ*. Translate 'And paralysed . . . still, though with little breath left in her, she tries to gaze upon the sun's rays.'

*χειρὸς ἄθλιον βάρος* is best referred to Alcestis herself, as 'a wretched burden in the hands' of her supporter. [Others understand *χειρὸς* of the hand or arm of Alcestis, which is now a useless dead weight to her, —taking *βάρος* as the acc. of respect after *παρειμένη*.]

[After l. 206 these two lines are inserted :—

ὥς οὔ ποτ' αὖθις, ἀλλὰ νῦν πανύστατον  
ἀκτῖνα κύκλον θ' ἡλίου προσόψεται.

They are considered to be an interpolation from *Hecuba* 112, where they recur; and are, at all events, not necessary to complete the sense of this passage. The sentiment however is natural, especially from a Greek point of view, a last appeal to the sun as the source of light being regarded as a solemn religious act. Cp. l. 243. Thus Polyxena in the *Hecuba*, 412, addresses the sun in the passage above referred to, so does Iphigenia in her parting words *Iph. in Aul.* 1505 ἰὼ λαμπαδοῦχος ἡμέρα, Διὸς τε φέγγος, &c.; also Ajax before taking the fatal leap (*Soph. Aias* 856), exclaims σὲ δ' ὦ φαεινῆς ἡμέρας τὸ νῦν σέλας, καὶ τὸν διφρεῦτήν 'Ἠλίον προσεννέπω.]

l. 209. σὴν, addressed to the leader of the Chorus. Cp. l. 131.

Exit HANDMAID. The Chorus now divides as before, l. 77. [Hermann distributes the following Strophe among five Choreutae, making a similar division in the Antistrophe, l. 226.]

ll. 213-243. CHORUS. 'Is there yet no deliverance? I fear there is none, but let us not cease our prayer. Great Paean, if thou canst, hear and save! But see! yonder comes Alcestis, with her husband. Mourn, cry aloud, Phraean land! the best of women is departing. Never more will I praise wedded life; such sorrow hath it brought upon my king.'

l. 213. τίς πῶς, a double interrogative (some MSS. insert πᾶ). Cp. *Helena* 873 τί τὰμὰ πῶς ἔχει θεοπίσματα; τίς ἄν = utinam. Cp. *Soph. Oed. Col.* 1100 τίς ἂν θεῶν σοι τόνδ' ἄριστον ἄνδρ' ἰδεῖν δοίῃ; Compare πῶς ἂν ὁλοῖμαν l. 865.

πόρος κακῶν, 'way out of our troubles,' like μηχανὰν κακῶν l. 222.

l. 215. τέμω, the 'deliberative' subj. Cp. l. 131 n. The sense is, 'Is any one coming who will tell us if all is over, or shall we take it for granted, and begin the ceremonies of woe at once (ἤδη)?' Observe the change of number in ἀμφιβαλόμεθα.

l. 219. θεῶν, a monosyllable, unless we omit the γάρ with some editions. But the reading is uncertain; see note on the antistrophic line 233.

l. 220. Παιάν. Cp. l. 91 n.

l. 222. πάρος τοῦδε, 'before now.' Cp. ll. 11, 32. Πάρος as a preposition is oftener used of place than of time, but in *Androm.* 1207 we have θανεῖν σὲ χρῆν πάρος τέκνων. [Hermann reads τῆδ' ἐφεῦρες τοῦτο (i.e. for Admetus), and repeats στείαζον in the antistrophe, l. 236. The reading again is uncertain.]

l. 229. ἄρα = nonne (cp. ll. 341, 771), sometimes = num (as in l. 477). It is not in itself interrogative, being merely a strengthened form of ἄρα.

ἱξία σφαγᾶς, &c., means 'enough to make one cut one's throat, and more than enough to make one hang oneself.' Cp. Aristoph. *Acharn.* 125 τοῦτο δῆτ' οὐκ ἀγχόνη. Suicide by the sword was thought more honourable than by hanging, as appears from *Hel.* 298—

ἀσχήμονες μὲν ἀγχόνηι μετάρσιοι,  
σφαγαὶ δ' ἔχουσιν εὐγενές τε καὶ καλόν.

But no such distinction is recognised here, and in *Hipp.* 772 the contrary opinion is expressed.

l. 230. οὐρανίῳ, 'high in air.' Cp. *Troad.* 1088 τεῖχη οὐράνια. So 'aeriae palumbes' Virg. *Ecl.* iii. 69. The double σ in πελάσσαι is another instance of Epic licence in Choral odes (cp. ll. 126, 127 n.). This one occurs even in iambic lines, as χείρεσσι l. 756, μέσσον ἔγχος *Soph. Antig.* 1236.

[l. 233. For εἰν Dindorf reads ἐν to match the strophic line 219 (if γάρ be retained there). Cp. l. 436, *Soph. Antig.* 1241 εἰν Ἄιδου δόμοις. But both those passages are a reproduction of the Homeric phrase εἰν Ἄϊδαο δόμοισιν *Il.* xxxiii. 179. In *Hippol.* 734 and *Heracl.* 893, where ἐνί appears in some editions, the MSS. read ἐνί.]

l. 237. μαραινόμεναν παρ' Ἄιδαν, i.e. 'wasting away (and going) to Hades,' the so-called 'pregnant' construction of a preposition of motion with a verb denoting rest; as in the well-known lines 'I am wearing away to the Land of the Leal.' Cp. l. 363 ἐκείσε προσδῶκα, *Soph. Oed. Col.* 1552 κρήφω παρ' Ἄιδαν.

l. 238. οὐποτε φήσω, 'I will never maintain,' not, as Monk and others take it = *semper negabo*. This would give ποτέ a sense which it cannot bear (see note on l. 198). So Prof. Jebb on *Soph. Aias* 194, ὅπου στηρίζει ποτέ, rightly joins ποτέ with ὅπου, because it cannot by itself = αἰεί ποτε. For the sentiment cp. ll. 879 &c., also *Medea* 1081 &c., where the Chorus recount the advantages of a single life. In the *Ion* 488 the contrary opinion is expressed, τὸν ἄπαιδα δ' ἀποστνγῶ βίον, φ' τε δοκεῖ, ψέγω. In each case Euripides is only making his characters say what is appropriate to the occasion, and not necessarily giving his own opinion.

l. 240. ὅστις = *quippe qui*, 'since having lost,' &c.

l. 241. ἀπλακῶν, instead of the more usual form ἀμπλακῶν with the euphonic μ (as in ἄμβροτος, πίμπλημι, &c.). Cp. ἡμπλακες l. 418. But ἀπλακεῖν, ἀπλακῶν, &c. are used when the first syllable is required to be short, as here.

ἀβίωτον βιοτεύσει is an instance of *oxymoron*, a verbal paradox produced by the combination of two opposite ideas. Cp. βίος ἀβίωτος, 'life that is no life,' *Hippol.* 821, γάμος ἄγαμος *Soph. Oed. Tyr.* 1214.

ll. 243-279. Alcestis is borne upon the stage by her attendants in a dying state, accompanied by Admetus and her two children. Her

ejaculations, uttered in the near prospect of death, are broken by pathetic appeals from her husband not to desert him.

1. 243. Ἄλλε, &c. For addresses of dying people to the sun see note on l. 207.

1. 244. δῖναι. Cp. *Phoen.* 164 ἀνέμῳ κεος δρόμον νεφέλας. Euripides is supposed to be alluding to the theory of his master Anaxagoras concerning the revolution or 'rotation' of the heavens (περιχώρησις), which he elsewhere calls αἰθέριος ῥύμβος. The term δίνη however appears to have been first used by Democritus to describe the whirling motion (*vortex*) of atoms in the process of creation. This theory is ridiculed by Aristophanes in the *Clouds* 878, where Zeus is said to have been superseded by one 'Dinus,' as king of the universe. But surely an appeal to the common phenomena of drifting or eddying clouds—the 'heavenly dance o' the fleet cloud-figure,' as Mr. Browning renders it—does not necessarily involve any such philosophical allusion; though the words of Admetus (l. 251) λίσσου θεούς seem to be meant as a remonstrance against the invocation of natural objects only.

1. 245. The agitation of Alcestis is aptly expressed in lyric verse; the calmer iambics of Admetus have a soothing effect. Cp. *Hel.* 632, *Ion* 1441. The train of thought is—'Yes, the sun sees our calamity, though the gods deal thus hardly with us.'

1. 249. πατῶας, as in *Troades* 164. Cp. πατῶων *Med.* 430, γεραίᾱς *Hec.* 62, all according to regular practice. Some have unnecessarily substituted πατρίας, πατρίων, &c. in these passages. Hermann's distinction between πάτριος, 'paternal,' and πατῶος, 'hereditary,' does not always hold good. Here, for instance, Alcestis regards Iolcos rather as her *father's* home than as an *hereditary* possession.

1. 250. προδῶς. Cp. l. 202 η.

1. 252. δίκωπον σκάφος. Cp. l. 433, Lucian *Charon* ch. 1 ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν δικωπίαν ἐρέτω μόνος. Σκάφος is the Lat. *scapha* (*Hor. Od.* iii. 29, 6), our 'skiff.' For a description of Charon's office see *Virg. Aen.* vi. 302, &c. [The MS. addition of ἐν λίμνῃ (sc. Ἀχερουσίᾳ) at the end of this line is a gloss to explain the allusion in σκάφος. It does not suit the antistrophic line 258, unless the equally needless repetition of ἄγει τις before ἄγει μέ τις be there adopted, and even then the ι in λίμνῃ cannot be shortened so as to correspond with οὐχ ὄρᾱς.]

1. 254. Perhaps Aristophanes has parodied this line in *Lysistrata* 605, where an old man is taunted with the words ὁ Χάρων σε καλεῖ σὺ δὲ κωλύεις ἀνάγεσθαι.

1. 255. τάδε τοί με, &c. 'these are the words with which he urges me, in his hurry to be gone.' ταχύνει τάδε = τάδε λέγει ταχύνων. Cp. *Soph. Aias* 1107 τὰ σέμν' ἔπη κόλαξ' ἐκείνους, = λέγε κολάζων. Dante, *Inferno* iii. 110, represents Charon as striking the loiterers with his oar, 'batte

col remo qualunque s' adagia.' [Another reading is σὺ κατείργεις τὰδ' ἔτοιμα σπερχόμενοις τάχυνε, i. e. 'you are delaying the preparations for those in a hurry; be quick!'] This has less authority than the other, and destroys the telling pause after κατείργεις.]

ll. 260, 261. τῖς with Ἀΐδας (οὐχ ὁρᾶς being parenthetical), 'some phantom like Hades,' *nescio quod simulacrum Orci*. Cp. Virg. *Aen.* i. 181 'Anthea si quem,' i. e. 'any one such as Antheus.'

l. 262. Ἑφες, 'unhand me,' said to the supposed phantom. Then finding resistance unless she exclaims οἶαν ὁδόν, &c.

l. 264. ἐκ δὲ τῶν = ἐκ τούτων sc. φίλων. Cp. l. 883, where τῆς = ταύτης, Soph. *Oed. Col.* 742 ἐκ δὲ τῶν μάλιστα ἐγώ. [Others make ἐκ τῶν = ἐκ τῶνδε, 'next to these,' like ἐκ δὲ τῆς Θέμιν Aesch. *Eumen.* 2. But μάλιστα seems to imply that Admetus speaks of himself as chiefest among her mourning relatives.]

l. 272. χαίροντες ὀρφτον = 'farewell and live on,' *vivite et valet* (Monk). Cp. ll. 325, 437, though in the latter passage χαίρουσα has the additional sense of 'rejoicing.'

l. 273. τόδ' ἔπος, i. e. the word 'farewell.'

l. 275. πρὸς σε θεῶν. Cp. l. 1098, *Hippol.* 607 ὦ πρὸς σε γονάτων, Soph. *Phil.* 468 πρὸς ἰὺν σε πατρός, &c. The language of emotion puts the pronoun σέ first, but not before the preposition, as this would imply a contrast between σέ and θεῶν, &c. which is not intended. This construction was imitated by Latin poets, as 'per ego te deos oro' Ter. *Andria* iii. 3, 'per vos et fortia facta' Virg. *Aen.* x. 369.

τλῆς (also τόλμα l. 277). See on ἔτλην l. 2.

l. 277. ἄνα, 'up!' with the force of a verb, = ἀνάστα. Cp. Soph. *Aias* 194 ἀλλ' ἄνα ἐξ ἐδράνων.

l. 279. ἐν σοὶ ἐσμέν, &c. = ἐν σοὶ ἔστιν ἡμᾶς καὶ ζῆν καὶ μὴ ζῆν, i. e. 'our life or death depends upon thee.'

ll. 280-368. ALCESTIS. 'Hear, O Admetus, my last wishes. I have given my life for you; grant me this one favour in return, and let no stepmother come between these children and their lawful rights. I fear me much, my daughter, you will have to mourn a mother's loss, when you most need her aid. But my time draws near; farewell, and forget me not, the best of wives and the best of mothers!' ADMETUS. 'This will I do; fear not. Children I have enough, and these shall be my solace when thou art gone. All my life long will I mourn thy loss; no sound of mirth or revelry shall again be heard in my halls. Thy image shall be laid upon my couch; this I will embrace, cold comfort though it be. Visit me, if thou canst, in my dreams! Had I the tongue of Orpheus, I would surely descend to Hades and bear thee thence. But there await my coming, since not even in death may we be disunited.'

l. 280. τὰμὰ πράγματα is the accus. after ὀρῆς (not the subject of ἔχει) according to the usual Greek idiom, occasionally found also in English, as 'I know *thee*, who thou art,' οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, Luke iv. 34.

l. 281. λέξαι θέλω σοι, &c. 'I wish to tell you what I desire (to have done).' Θέλω implies power to effect one's purpose, βούλομαι states a desire which it may or may not be in one's power to accomplish. Alcestis could state her wishes, but it would devolve upon Admetus to carry them out. Thus in l. 285 ὃν ἤθελον is 'whom I chose' to wed, in l. 287 οὐκ ἠθέλησα, 'I did not choose,' but cp. Hom. *Il.* xxiv. 226 εἰ δέ μοι αἴσα τεθνάμεναι . . . βούλομαι, 'if it is my fate to die, I am ready to submit.' Hence the colloquial phrases βούλει φράσω; &c. 'would you like me to tell?' [This distinction is not always observed; the seemingly exceptional cases in Homer, where βούλομαι is said of the will of the gods, are however not really so, since with them the power to act always accompanies the will.]

ll. 282-287. This sentence is complicated by the insertion of a second principal verb ἠθέλησα after θνήσκω. Hence some have proposed to simplify it by beginning a fresh clause at παρόν, or by reading κοῦκ or οὐδέ for οὐκ in l. 287. But the passage appears to be quite genuine as it stands; though it may be well in translating to repeat παρόν before σχεῖν, 'but, though I might have had any husband of the Thessalians whom I chose, yet I preferred not to live,' &c.

l. 282. σέ πρεσβεύουσα = προτιμῶσα, l. 155. Πρεσβεύειν properly denotes the respect due to old age. Cp. *Hippol.* 5 τοὺς μὲν σέβοντας τὰμὰ πρεσβεύω κράτη. Similarly in Latin cp. Cic. *ad Atticum* vii. 3 'quod honestius, id mihi est antiquius,' i.e. 'of more value.'

l. 283. καταστήσασα, probably = ποιήσασα, sc. σέ, lit. 'having caused you to see the light instead of living myself.' But καθιστάναι with infin. in this sense is rare. It is possible to take (σέ) φῶς τόδ' εἰσορᾶν as = τὸν σὸν βίον, i.e. 'having secured your life in exchange for mine.' Or 'reckoned your life as an equivalent for mine.'

l. 288. ἐφεισάμην, sc. δάρων ἡβης.

l. 291. καλῶς μὲν, &c. 'though they had reached a fit time of life for dying gloriously,' or 'with credit to themselves.' ἦκον αὐτοῖς = ἡκόντων αὐτῶν, and ἦκον is the so-called 'accus. absolute,' like παρόν l. 284, ἐξόν, δόξαν, τυχόν, &c. Ἦκειν is lit. 'to have arrived at' a certain point, hence 'to be situated' in it, so that καλῶς ἦκειν βίου is 'to be well situated in respect of age.' Cp. Hdt. i. 30 τοῦ βίου εὖ ἦκοντι, v. 62 χρημάτων εὖ ἦκοντες, *Electra* 751 πῶς ἀγῶνος ἦκομεν; For the sentiment respecting old age cp. ll. 643, &c. (where however Admetus adds an argument based upon the comparative worthlessness of his father's life), also Cic. *de Senect.* ch. 19 'Quid est tam secundum naturam, quam senibus emori?'

1. 295. ἔζων, imperf., 'I should now be living.' Alcestis speaks as though shē were already dead. [Some wrongly read ἔζην, which is a later 2 aor. form arising from ἔζης, ἔζη of the imperf., whence also come the imperat. ζῆθι. But the 3rd pl. is always ἔζων.]

1. 299. εἶεν (a form of εἶα, cp. ἐπείτεν for ἐπείτα), 'well then,' a formula of resignation. Alcestis passes from the ungrateful thought of the parents' conduct to what she had most at heart, the welfare of her children.

1. 300. ἀξίαν μὲν οὐποτε, 'no due equivalent.' Cp. Hom. *Il.* ix. 401 οὐ γὰρ ἐμοὶ ψυχῆς ἀντάξιον οὐδ' ὅσα φασὶν Ἴλιον ἐκτῆσθαι, &c.

1. 303. εἵπερ, 'since,' stating a fact. Cp. l. 200 n., also l. 326 n.

1. 304. ἀνάσχου δεσπότας sc. ὄντας, 'allow them to be (lit. 'submit to their being') rulers.' Cp. *Med.* 74 καὶ ταῦτ' ἰάσων παῖδας ἐξανέξεται πάσχοντας.

1. 305. ἐπιγῆμης, &c. 'marry over the heads of these children' (as we say). Cp. l. 373. Ἐπιγάμειν is to take a second wife, like the Lat. *inducere*, as in Pliny *Epist.* 33 'novercam filiae induxerat.' This is one of the many passages in the classics dealing with the subject of step-mothers, whose cruelty has at all times been proverbial. Cp. *Ion* 1025 φθονεῖν γὰρ φασὶ μητρυνὴν τέκνοισ. Hesiod, *Works and Days* 823, speaks of lucky and unlucky days as μήτερες and μητρυναί respectively, and Aeschylus, *Prom.* V. 727 calls the dangerous rocky coast of Salmydessus a μητρυνὴ νεῶν. In an epigram of Callimachus we are told how a boy went to place a garland on his stepmother's tomb, which fell upon him and crushed him, out of pure spite as the verses suggest! A law of Charondas of Thurium enacted that none should be members of the senate who had brought a stepmother into their families. In Latin we have such passages as Hor. *Epod.* v. 9, 1 'Quid ut noverca me intueris?' and the expressions 'novercales stimuli,' 'novercalia odia' in Tacitus; also the Virgilian epithets 'injusta,' 'saeva,' 'mala' applied to a stepmother. On the other side it is but fair to quote the words which Propertius, v. 11. 85, &c., puts into the mouth of the dying Cornelia—

'Seu tamen adversum mutarit janua lectum,  
Sederit et nostro cauta noverca toro,  
Conjugium, pueri, laudate et ferte paternum;  
Capta dabit vestris moribus illa manus.  
Nec matrem laudate nimis; collata priori  
Vertet in offensas libera verba suas.'

1. 311. πύργον μέγαν, 'a strong tower of defence,' a common and obvious metaphor often used in Scripture. Cp. Soph. *Oed. Tyr.* 1200 θανάτων δ' ἐμῇ χώρῃ πύργος ἀνέστα. So *arx* in Latin, as in Livy vii. 29 'arcem finitimorum Campanos adorti.'



[The line *δν καὶ προσεῖπε καὶ προσερρήθη πάλιν*, inserted in old editions after l. 311 is an obvious repetition of l. 195. It has been defended as showing *how* the father might protect his son; but such explanation is superfluous, nor would the line, if retained, be adequate for that purpose. Moreover the verb should rather be in the subjunctive than in the indicative—‘whom he *may* address,’ &c.]

l. 314. *ποίας* after *πῶς* is another instance of double interrogation (see l. 213 n.). ‘How wilt thou prosper in thy maidenhood, and what sort of a consort to thy father wilt thou find?’ *πατρί* goes closely with *σύ*, ‘father’s-consort’ = ‘stepmother.’ [Reiske’s proposed alteration to *τοίας* . . . *ἥ σοι* is therefore unnecessary.]

*συζύγου*. In l. 921 the other form *σύζυξ* occurs. So *ἄζυξ* and *ἄζυγος*, *γόργωψ* and *γόργωπος*, *ἄδμης* and *ἄδμητος*, &c. were used indiscriminately.

l. 315. *μή* = ‘I fear lest,’ &c. In these phrases there is no real ellipse of *δέδοικα*; rather it may be said that ‘the Greek language formed through this *μή* with the subjunctive, and a certain emphasis of utterance, sentences expressive of care or admonition, just as there are sentences expressive of a wish, request, or interrogation’ (Buttmann).

l. 316. *διαφθείρη*, i. e. ‘spoil your chances of making a good match,’ in order to make way for one of her own daughters.

l. 317. The stress is on *μήτηρ*, ‘you will have no *mother* to arrange your marriage.’ *Νυμφεύειν* is here transitive as in *Iph. in Aul.* 885 *Ἀχιλλεῖ παῖδα νυμφεύσουσα σήν*. Cp. *ὀρφανεύσαι* l. 165. Like other verbs in *-εύω* (as *δουλεύω*, &c.) it is usually intransitive; cp. *Soph. Antig.* 816 *Ἀχέροντι νυμφεύσω*.

l. 321. *οὐδ’ ἐς τρίτην*, &c. *Alcestis* means to say, ‘I shall die, not to-morrow, nor the day after, but on this very day.’ So far is plain, but there is a difficulty about *μηνός*. Some refer it to the known custom of demanding payment of debts on the first day of the month, and suppose that indulgent creditors may have allowed three ‘days of grace;’ but there is no further evidence of this. Others refer to a supposed law obliging condemned criminals to drink the hemlock within three days after their sentence. Whether such a law ever existed it is needless to enquire, since *μηνός* would still remain unexplained. No satisfactory solution has as yet been proposed, and the word *μηνός* may not be genuine.

l. 322. *λέξομαι*, in a passive sense, ‘I shall be reckoned.’ Cp. *στερήσεσθε Hippol.* 1460, *ὑπὸ τῶν ἱππέων οὐ βλάφονται Thuc.* vi. 64. In some instances a reflexive force is possible, as in *Plato Crito* ch. 54 *παιδεύσονται* ‘they will *get* an education,’ but not always. Originally the distinction between the forms in *-σομαι* and *-θήσομαι* seems to have been less strongly marked; hence the shorter form was often used for convenience.



1. 323. χαίροντες εὐφραίναισθε. See on l. 272.

1. 325. μητρός, sc. ἀρίστης from the preceding line.

1. 326. πρὸ τούτου, &c. 'I am not afraid to vouch for his doing it.' Cp. Hom. *Il.* v. 830 μηδ' ἄξιο θοῦρον Ἄρηα, *Orest.* 1116 οὐκ ἄξομαι. [ἄξομαι is probably another form of ἀγαμαι (cp. ἔργον and ῥέζω), the radical meaning being that of astonishment and awe.]

1. 327. The readings vary between εἴπερ ἀμαρτάνει and ἥνπερ ἀμαρτάνη. The first means 'since he is not (as a fact) wanting in sense,' (cp. l. 303 n.); the second 'if he be not (at some future time) wanting, &c.'

1. 331. προσφθέγγεται, 'shall have anything to say to me as a husband' (Paley). τόνδ' ἄνδρα should probably be taken together in the usual sense = ἐμέ. Cp. *Il.* 690, 1084. In the *Hippolytus* 860 Theseus says of his deceased wife Phaedra, λέκτρα γὰρ τὰ Θησέως οὐκ ἔστι δῶμά θ' ἦτις εἴσεισιν γυνή.

1. 333. ἄλλως, 'besides,' i. e. be she beautiful as well as noble. Cp.

l. 533. So ἄλλος in such sentences as ἄνθρωποι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα πρόβατα, 'men and cattle besides,' οὐκ ἦν χόρτος οὔτε ἄλλο δένδρον Xen. *Anab.* i. 5.

ἐκπρεπεστάτη, 'of such surpassing beauty,' instead of simply saying οὕτως ἐκπρεπής in continuation of the preceding line. [Perhaps the right reading is εὐπρεπεστάτη.]

1. 334. ἅλις δὲ παίδων, &c. 'I have children enough already; in these I pray that I may be blest,' (pointing to them as they stood by).

1. 336. ἐτήσιον, the period fixed by Admetus for the public mourning (l. 431). The usual time at Athens seems to have been thirty days. Ovid, *Fasti* iii. 134, mentions a year as the time at Rome for a wife's mourning after the death of her husband. πένθος τὸ σόν = 'mourning for thee' answering to the 'objective' genitive (l. 426). Cp. Aesch. *Persae* 699 τὴν ἐμὴν αἰδῶ μεθείς = 'reverence toward me,' Hom. *Od.* xi. 202 σός τε πόθος σά τε μήδεα.

1. 339. λόγῳ . . . ἔργῳ, a common rhetorical antithesis, much affected by Thucydides. Cp. *Phoen.* 526 οὐκ εἶ λέγειν χρὴ μὴ 'πὶ τοῖς ἔργοις καλοῖς. Admetus urges this complaint with great force against his father, l. 614, &c. Plato, *Symposium* ch. 7, says that Alcestis 'so far surpassed the parents of Admetus in affection for him, as to make them appear strangers in comparison, and relatives only in name.'

1. 341. ἄρα = *nonne*. Cp. l. 229 n.

1. 343. κῶμους, 'carousals,' properly 'bands of revellers,' as in Aesch. *Agam.* 1188, where Cassandra speaks of the Furies in Agamemnon's house as a κῶμος δὺςπεμπτος ἔξω.

1. 344. κατεῖχε, 'used to fill,' of sound, as in Soph. *Philoct.* 10 κατεῖχ' αἰεὶ πᾶν στρατόπεδον δυσφημίαις.

1. 346. Λίβυν αὐλόν, called Λίβυς λωτός in *Helena* 170, *Troades* 543.

Flutes were made from the wood of the lotus, an African tree. λακεῖν here = ᾄσαι, 'to sing,' as in *Hippol.* 55 κῶμος λέλακεν. It is a primitive word of sound, used of the ringing of metal in Hom. *Il.* xiv. 25 λάκε χαλκός, and of speech (but in a mock heroic strain) in Aristoph. *Ach.* 410 τί λέλακας; = 'what did you say?'

l. 348. δέμας τὸ σόν, &c. This peculiar method of consolation may seem strange to us, and has been severely criticised. But, as Professor Paley observes, 'the Greeks had a deeper feeling for sculptured forms than we can pretend to realise;' and Euripides here, as elsewhere, transfers the ideas and manners of his own time to that in which his scene is laid. Aeschylus, *Agam.* 406, represents Menelaus as so overwhelmed with grief at the loss of his Helen, that not even the grace of εὐμορφοὶ κολοσσοί could console him; and in Propertius v. 11. 83 the shade of Cornelia addresses Paullus thus—

'Atque ubi secreto nostra ad simulacra loqueris,  
Ut responsurae singula verba jace.'

[Joddrell quotes an epitaph at Naples by one Bernardino Rota on his wife—'Infelix ille, qui mortua Portia cum ea sepeliri debuit. En! hic fingi pertulit, ut quando aliter nequit, marmorea conjuge frui liceat.']

l. 352. Cp. *Helena* 35 καὶ δοκεῖ μ' ἔχειν, κενὴν δόκησιν, οὐκ ἔχων. For τέρψιν, the accus. in apposition to the sentence, see l. 7 n.

l. 353. οἶμαι, 'to be sure,' 'no doubt,' Lat. *sane*. Cp. l. 565. It is often ironical (*credo* and *ut puto*) as in *Med.* 311 σὺ δ', οἶμαι, σωφρονῶν ἔδρας τάδε, 'of course you did all this discreetly.'

l. 354. ἀπαντλοῖην, 'lighten,' properly said of pumping water out of a ship's hold. Cp. Aesch. *Prom.* 84 τῶνδ' ἀπαντλήσαι πόνων. Similarly in *Hippol.* 767 a man is said to be ὑπέραντλος συμφορᾶ, lit. 'waterlogged.'

l. 355. φίλους . . . παρῇ, possibly a change from plural to singular, as in *Androm.* 421 οἰκτρὰ γὰρ τὰ δυστυχῇ βροτοῖς ἅπασιν, κὰν θυραῖος ὦν κυρῇ, but more likely παρῇ is impersonal, 'it may be allowed' to see them. [Others read φίλος, i.e. 'a friend is a pleasant thing to see;' cp. Κίπρις οὐ φορητόν *Hippol.* 445, 'triste lupus stabulis' Virg. *Ecl.* iii. 80, &c.]

l. 357. Cp. *Iph. in Aul.* 1211 &c., where the maiden, pleading for her life, exclaims, εἰ μὲν τὸν Ὀρφέως εἶχον, ᾧ πατέρ, λόγον . . . ἐνταῦθ' ἂν ἦλθον. Also Moschus, iii. 122, on the death of Bion, εἰ δυνάμιαν δέ, ὥς Ὀρφεὺς καταβάς . . . κήγῳ τάχ' ἂν ἐς δόμον ἦλθον Πλούτεος.

l. 358. ὦστ' ἦ, corrected from ὥς τήν. Κόρη was used without the article as a title of Persephone (like βασιλεύς for the king of Persia). For κείνης referring to the nearest noun cp. l. 8 n.

l. 359. κηλήσαντα. Cp. Hor. *Od.* iii. 11. 15 'Cessit immanis tibi blandienti janitor aulae.'

1. 361. οὐπὶ κώπη. Cp. l. 428 ὅς τ' ἐπὶ κώπα . . . ἴζει.

1. 362. ἔσχον=κατέσχον, 'should hold me back.' The pres. is commonly ἴσχω in this sense. For the plural verb after ἡ . . . ἥ cp. *Hec.* 87 Ἐλένου ψυχὴν ἡ Κασάνδρας, ὥς μοι κρίνωσιν ὀνείρους. Here the idea is suggested of Charon and Cerberus combining their strength.

σὸν βίον=te vivam, as in *Bacch.* 1339 σὸν καθιδρύσει βίον.

1. 363. ἐκεῖσε, 'yonder,' a vague euphemism for the other world. For the adverb of motion, 'expect me *when I come* thither,' see l. 237 n.

1. 364. This points to a definite belief in the possibility of reunion after death, depending (as the γάρ in the next line implies) in some measure upon the bodies being buried in one tomb. In the *Orestes* 1053 Electra prays that one coffin may receive her brother's corpse and her own, and in Homer *Od.* xxiv. 76 the bones of Patroclus are laid with those of Achilles. An epitaph by Boethius Torquatus, in the 8th century A.D., concludes thus—

'Ut thalami cumlique comes, nec morte revellar,  
Et socios vitae nectat uterque cinis.'

1. 365. κέδροις. Cp. l. 160. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxiv. 5 says, 'Cedrus defuncta corpora incorrupta aevs servat.' The Egyptians used cedar oil in embalming (*Hdt.* ii. 87). Sandys, *Travels*, book ii., speaks of the 'juice of cedars, which, by the extreme bitterness and siccative faculty, hath preserved [the bodies] uncorrupted.'

1. 366. σοί, after ταῖσιν αὐταῖς, 'the same coffin with thee.' Cp. *Elect.* 320 ἐς ταῦτά βαίνων ἄρματ' ἐκφοιτᾷ πατρί. The expression πλευρὰ ἐκτείνειναι would be inaccurate if the corpse of Alcestis was to be burnt, as is implied in πρὸς τάφον τε καὶ πυρὰν l. 608. The bodies of the dead were sometimes buried and sometimes burnt; in the latter case the ashes were collected and entombed. The verbs θάπτειν and *sepelire* denoted either process.

1. 368. This line also (cp. ll. 182, 253) is parodied in the *Acharnians* 895, where Dicaeopolis addresses a fine eel μηδὲ γὰρ θανάων ποτε σοῦ χωρὶς εἶην ἐντετευτλανωμένης—'dressed with beet-root!' Aristophanes, we should think, might well have spared such a passage as this.

ll. 369-434. CHORUS. 'I too, as a friend, will share thy sorrow.' ALC. 'Hear now, my children, your father's promise! (to ADMETUS) Receive these children from my hands.' ADM. 'I do receive them, and what I have said I will perform—Take me with thee, I pray, to the world below!' ALC. 'It cannot be; my death suffices—But my eye grows dim. Farewell, my children! farewell!' ADM. 'Ah me! I am undone.' CHO. 'The wife of Admetus is no more.' EUMELUS. 'My mother is gone; she has left me desolate. Hear, mother, thine own child who calls thee!' ADM. 'She hears not, nor sees thee; a hard fate is ours!' EUM. 'Sad indeed is my lot;

and thine too, my sister! In vain, father, didst thou wed, since she has gone before thee.' CHO. 'Admetus, thou must bear thy fate, which comes not on thee alone.' ADM. 'I know it too well. But I go to make ready for the burial. Stay ye here, and raise the dirge. Let there be a whole year's mourning throughout my realm, since she is worthy of all honour from me, who has given her life for mine.'

l. 369. καὶ μὴν, 'be sure that.' Cp. l. 64 n.

πένθος τῆσδε. See note on l. 336.

l. 372. μὴ γαμεῖν, 'that he will not wed.' Γαμεῖν is the fut. from the primitive stem γαμ- of the verb. Cp. l. 1089. Homer uses the intermediate uncontracted form, as in *Il.* ix. 391 οὐδέ μιν ὥς γαμέω. Afterwards γαμήσω was formed from γαμέω, the pres. in use.

l. 373. ἐφ' ὑμῖν. See on ἐπιγήμες l. 305.

l. 375. ἐπὶ τοῖσδε, 'on these conditions.' Cp. *Phoen.* 1240 ἐπὶ τοῖσδε δ' ἐσπέισαντο. So ἐπὶ τοῦτοις, ἐφ' ᾧ, &c. The anapaest in the first foot of an iambic line is freely employed by Euripides, but never by Aeschylus or Sophocles, except when the foot consists of a single word.

l. 377. So the dying Cornelia entreats Paullus for her children, 'Fungere maternis vicibus, pater' (*Propert.* v. 11. 75). Cp. the old ballad of the *Babes in the Wood* (Norfolk Tragedy):—

'You must be father and mother both,  
And uncle all in one.'

l. 378. Each γε in this line has its own force. 'Sore need they will have, when they have lost you.' Cp. *Phoen.* 554 τά γ' ἀρκοῦνθ' ἱκανὰ τοῖς γε σώφροσιν.

l. 381. χρόνος μαλάξει, repeated at l. 1085. Thus Dido, in her transport of grief, exclaims, '*Tempus inane peto, requiem spatiumque furori*' (*Virg. Aen.* iv. 433).

οὐδέν, i.e. non-existent, and therefore incapable of grieving you.

l. 382. This is a practical comment upon Admetus' words ἄρτι μανθάνω l. 940. In the bitterness of parting he asks for what, if granted, would have made his wife's self-sacrifice futile. There is a quiet dignity in her reply, which is almost as much as to say, 'One life is enough, and that life might have been your own, but now, by your act, it is mine.'

l. 383. οἱ προθήσκοντες. When a woman speaks of herself in the plural, she uses the masculine gender. Cp. *Soph. Elect.* 399 πεσοῦμεθ', εἰ χρὴ, πατρὶ τιμωρούμενοι. [She may however use a plural verb only, and proceed with a participle in the fem. sing., as in *Iph. in Tauris* 349 ἡγγιώμεθα, δοκούσ' Ὀρέστην μηκέθ' ἥλιον βλέπειν.]

l. 384. ᾧ δαῖμον, &c. In accusing destiny Admetus ignores the fact that it was all his own doing. Cp. l. 382 n.

l. 385. σκότεινον is 'proleptic,' i. e. expresses the effect of βαρύνεται, 'My eye is weighed down in darkness.' Cp. l. 35 n.

l. 387. ὥς οὐκέτ' οὔσαν οὐδέν, 'as a thing of nought now.' Cp. l. 381 n.

l. 389. Here Alcestis in her turn is forced by the agony of the moment to say what was not strictly true, since her act had been voluntary. Cp. l. 17. But how true to nature is the whole scene!

l. 391. προλείπεις, 'abandon me,' like προδοῦναι in ll. 202, 250. So προλιπούσα l. 396. [Some render the πρό, 'prematurely,' but προλείπειν means rather 'to go forth and leave.']

With the word χαίρε Alcestis breathes her last, so that 'we have death literally acted on the stage' (Paley). This is also the case in the *Hippolytus* 1457, where however the hero veils his face, that the moment of death may not be apparent. [Horace, *Ars Poet.* 185, lays down the rule, 'ne pueros coram Medea trucidet;' but there is a wide difference between such harrowing exhibitions and a quiet death-scene like this.]

l. 394. The part of Eumelus was recited by one of the Chorus from behind the scenes, while the child acted it on the stage. Hence such a part was called παρασκήνιον or παραχορήγημα. Thus in the *Andromache* l. 504 the child Molossus laments in concert with his mother. Usually children had no speaking part assigned them, e.g. in *Iph. in Aul.* 1241 Iphigenia begs her infant brother to intercede for her life, exclaiming ἴδον, σιωπῶν λίσσεται σ' ὄδ', ὦ πάτερ. In Soph. *Aias* 550 Ajax addresses his son Eurysaces at some length, but the boy does not reply. The children of Medea (*Med.* 1271) are heard crying out behind the scenes, but do not appear. Müller, *Literature of Greece*, p. 360, observes that 'Euripides brings children on the stage more frequently than his predecessors, perhaps for the same reason that made people produce their children to the judges, in order to touch their hearts by the sight of their innocence and helplessness.'

μαῖα, here 'mother,' usually 'nurse' = τρόφος, as in *Hippol.* 243, Hom. *Od.* ii. 372, xix. 500, where Telemachus and Odysseus respectively address Euryclea by this venerable title. [The root in μαῖ-a = 'great,' being softened from that of μέγ-as, mag-nus, &c., as in μαί-οr and in our own migh-t, H. G. mach-t. Hence Maia, the 'great mother' was identified with Δημήτηρ, or Mother Earth; cp. Aesch. *Choech.* 45 ὦ γαῖα μαῖα.]

l. 396. προλιπούσα. Cp. l. 391 n.

ἄμὸν βίον is something like σὸν βίον l. 362 n., only here βίον is more strongly emphasised,—'having abandoned the sustenance of my life,' i. e. 'having abandoned me when I most needed her support.' Cp. the words of Alcestis, l. 379, ὅτε ζῆν χρῆν μ', ἀπέρχομαι κάτω.

\**Ἀμός*, or *ἀμός* is Doric for *ἡμέτερος*, but used for *ἐμός*, as *ἡμεῖς* for *ἐγώ*, by the tragedians. Cp. *ὕμός* for *ὕμέτερος*.

1. 397. *τλάμων*, 'cruel,' lit. 'one who can bear' to do cruel things. See note on *ἐτλην* l. 1.

1. 403. *νεοσσός*, 'chick,' used of a young child, as in *Androm.* 442, *Heracl.* 240, *Troad.* 746, and elsewhere. So *pullus* in Latin; cp. *Hor. Sat.* i. 3. 45 'appellat *pullum*, . . . male parvus si cui filius est.'

1. 407. *μονόστολος*, 'desolate,' properly used of a ship without convoy.

*ματρός* depends on *λείπομαι*; cp. *Ion* 680 *λελειμμένη τέκνων*

*ὦ παθὼν ἐγώ*. Cp. *Soph. Trach.* 104 *ὦ πολλὰ μοχθήσας ἐγώ*

*σχέτλια ἔργα*, 'a cruel fate.' Cp. l. 469 n.

1. 412. *ἀνόνατ' ἐνύμφευσας*, 'a bootless marriage was thine.' So *Admetus* had said, l. 335, *σοῦ γὰρ οὐκ ὤνήμεθα*. '*Ἀνόνατα* is adverbial; cp. *Hippol.* 1145 *ἔτεκες ἀνόνητα*. *Νυμφεύειν* = both *uxorem ducere* and *nubere*, but the latter is commonly *νυμφεύεσθαι*. It also means 'to give in marriage,' as *μήτηρ σε νυμφεύσει* l. 317.

1. 413. *γῆρως τέλος*, 'the full time,' or 'completion of age.' *Τέλος* signifies perfection, not termination. So *ἤβης τέλος Med.* 920, 'the full flower of youth.'

1. 417. Cp. *Hippol.* 834—

οὐ σοὶ τάδ', ὦναξ, ἦλθε δὴ μόνῳ κακά,

πολλῶν μετ' ἄλλων δ' ὤλεσας κεδνὸν λέχος.

The same strain of consolation:—'the commonplace and vacant chaff well-meant for grain' (*Tennyson, In Mem. vi.*)—is repeated ll. 892, 932.

So the queen to *Hamlet*, i. 2. 7—

'Tis common; all that lives must die.'

Cp. *Cic. Tusc. Disp.* iii. 33 'Ne illa quidem firmissima consolatio est, quinquam usitata est, *non tibi hoc soli*. Prodest haec quidem, sed nec semper nec omnibus.'

1. 421. *προσέπτατο*, 'lighted on me,' as a bird swoops down upon its prey. Cp. *Soph. Aias* 282 *τίς γὰρ ποτ' ἀρχὴ τοῦ κακοῦ προσέπτατο*;

1. 422. *ἀλλά* goes with *ἄρεστε*, the clause *ἐκφορὰν γὰρ . . . νεκροῦ* being parenthetical, so that *γὰρ* practically = *ἐπεὶ*. Often the verb with *ἀλλά* has to be supplied from the context, e.g. in *Soph. Antig.* 155 the Chorus breaks off exclaiming *ἀλλ' ὅδε γὰρ δὴ βασιλεὺς . . . χαρεῖ*, 'but (we must pause) for here comes the king.' Thus *ἀλλὰ γὰρ* (like *sed enim* or *at enim*) became a mere colloquial phrase = 'but however,' marking a sudden transition of thought, or introducing an imaginary objection.

*ἐκφοράν*, 'burial.' Cp. *Aesch. Sept. c. Thebas* 1024 *ἄτιμον ἐκφορᾶς*. So *ἐκφέρειν* and *ἐκκομίζειν* = *θάπτειν*, because of the sanitary law, which



forbade interment within the walls of a town. *Efferre* has the same meaning, as in Hor. *Sat.* iv. 5. 84 'anus est elata,' Juv. *Sat.* i. 72 'nigros efferre maritos,' and even metaphorically, as 'elata respublica' Livy xxviii. 28.

1. 423. ἀντηχήσατε. The ἀντί refers to the *antistrophe* of the following chorus, l. 445.

1. 424. παιᾶνα here = 'a dirge,' and is therefore properly addressed to Hades. Cp. Aesch. *Sept. c. Theb.* 869 "Αἰδᾶ τ' ἐχθρόν παιᾶν' ἐπιμέλπειν. Otherwise the mention of a *paean* so addressed would be remarkable, as we are distinctly told that Hades (or Thanatos) was not honoured with the *paean*, μόνος θεῶν γὰρ θάνατος οὐ παιωνίζεται (Aesch. *Niobe* Fragment). Cp. *Iph. in Tauris* 185 μούσαν τὰν ἐν μολπαῖς "Αἰδας ὑμνεῖ δίχα παιάνων. Usually the *paean*, or hymn of victory, was distinguished from the 'Linus-song' or 'dirge,' which it was said to have superseded, as was symbolised in the myth of Linus overcome and slain by Apollo.

κάτωθεν = κάτω, an adverb of motion for one of rest. Cp. ll. 237. 363 n., also Soph. *Trach.* 601 ἕως σὺ ταῖς ἔσωθεν ἡγορῶ ξένας.

ἀσπὸνδω, 'inexorable,' whom no libations can appease.

1. 426. For πένθους, some read πένθος. Either construction is possible after κοινοῦσθαι, the gen. meaning 'to make oneself a partaker of' a thing, the accus. 'to have it in common' with another.

γυναικός, 'for my wife.' Cp. l. 336 n.

1. 427. κουρᾷ ξυρήκει, the usual sign of mourning. Cp. l. 215.

[Κουρᾷ (κείρειν) and ξυρόν are variations of the same word, thus: the stem κερ- (κυρ-, κουρ-) came by loss of an original σ from σκερ- (σκυρ-, &c.), and this transposed becomes κσυρ-, &c., i.e. ξυρ-.]

μελαγχίμοις πέπλοις. Another reading is μελαμπέλω στολῇ. Nearly the same line as in the text occurs in *Phoenissae* 372.

1. 428. μονάμπυκας, 'single horses,' also called κέλητες and μόνιπποι. Ζεύγυσθαι means 'to saddle' one horse, as well as 'to yoke' a pair. Cp. Aristoph. *Ρακ* 127 κάνθαρον ζεύξαντ' ἐλαύνειν. The ἄμπυξ, 'frontlet,' is a poetic ornamental addition to the bare adj. μόνος. So μονόφρουρον ἔρκος, 'sole defence,' Aesch. *Agam.* 257; δικρατεῖς λόγχας, 'double lances,' Soph. *Ant.* 146; ὀπισθόπους κῶμος, 'attendant train,' *Hippol.* 54. [Aristophanes, *Acharn.* 671, parodies the Pindaric epithet λιπαράμπυξ, applying it to a kind of sauce, Θασίαν λιπαράμπυκα.]

1. 429. σιδήρω, &c. So the Persians mourned for Masistius, σφέας τε αὐτοὺς κείροντες καὶ τοὺς ἵππους (Hdt. ix. 24). According to Plutarch the Thebans clipped their horses' manes at the funeral of Pelopidas, and Alexander did the same at that of Hephaestion. Orders were also given that music should cease throughout the camp.

1. 430. ἐκπληρουμένας, (*pres. part.*) lit. 'while twelve moons are ful-

filling their course,' i.e. for a whole twelvemonth. For the usual period of mourning see l. 336 n.

l. 434. *τιμᾶν*. Two inferior MSS. read *τιμῆς*. Compare l. 229 *ἄξια σφαγᾶς* with l. 1060 *ἄξια μοι σέβειν*, but the personal construction with *ἄξιος* or *ἄξια* usually takes the passive infin. as *ἄξια ἐστὶ τιμᾶσθαι* = *digna est quae honoretur*.

The corpse of Alcestis is now carried into the house, Admetus following with the children.

Ll. 435-475. CHORUS. 'Daughter of Pelias, all joyous be thy dwelling in Hades! the noblest that ever crossed the stream of the underworld. Oft in Athens and Lacedaemon shall the minstrels celebrate thy fame with lyre and song. O that I could bring thee back to life! for thou alone, in the flower of thy youth, wast found to redeem thy spouse from the grave. Light fall the mould of thy tomb, and woe to him, if he take another wife in thy stead! Rare indeed is his lot, who finds a consort like thee.'

l. 436. *χαίρουσα* combines the meanings of 'farewell,' and 'may'st thou have joy in thy dwelling.'

*μοι* is the so-called *dat. ethicus* = 'I pray thou mayest,' &c.

This line is almost a quotation from Homer *Il.* xxiii. 179 *χαῖρέ μοι, ὦ Πάτροκλε, καὶ εἰν Ἀΐδαο δόμοισιν*. Cp. l. 233 n.

l. 437. Cp. l. 852, *Herc. Fur.* 607 *ἐξ ἀνηλίων μυχῶν Ἄιδου*, Virg. *Aen.* vi. 534 'tristes sine sole domos.' Dante, *Inferno* iii. 23, speaks of the lower world as 'l' aere senza stelle.'

*οἰκετεύεις* = *οἰκοῖς*, from *οἰκέτης*, properly 'an inmate of the house,' but generally 'a servant.' The verb *οἰκετεύειν* seems not to occur elsewhere.

l. 438. *ἵστω πορεύσας*. Cp. l. 150 n. For Charon's office see l. 361 n.

l. 443. For the two accusatives, one of the direct object, the other of the space travelled over, cp. Soph. *Trach.* 560 *ὃς τὸν βαθύρρουν ποταμὸν . . . βροτοὺς μισθοῦ ἴπρευε*. So *trajicere*, as in Caesar *B. G.* i. 55 'equitum magnam partem flumen transjecit.'

*πορεύσας* would strictly apply to Charon alone, as the ferryman of the dead, but he acts under the command of Hades.

l. 445. *πολλά*, adverbial = *πολλάκις*. Cp. *ἀνόνата* l. 412 n.

l. 446. *μουσσοπόλοι*, 'minstrels,' lit. 'versed in song.' For *πολεῖν* and its cognates see l. 29 n.

A song on the subject of Admetus and Alcestis, sung as a 'scolion' at banquets, is alluded to by Aristophanes, *Vespae* 1238, and is also mentioned by Athenaeus. It began, *Ἀδμήτου λόγον μαθὼν τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς φίλει*.

l. 447. *χέλυν*, the tortoiseshell, of which Hermes is said to have made the first lyre. Cp. Hor. *Od.* iii. 11. 5 'testudo resonare septem callida nervis.'



ἑπτάτονον = ἑπτάχόρδον, since the strings of the lyre differed by the interval of a tone or a semitone only. [The original lyre had only four strings (some appear to have had no more than three); but in 650 B.C. Terpander is said to have added three more for the service of the gods.]

ἄλυροι ὕμνοι represent epic as distinguished from lyric poetry, being recited without accompaniment; though the lyre seems to have been used for preludes and interludes in the *Epos*.

1. 449. The *Carneia* was the great Spartan festival of Apollo, celebrated at the neighbouring town of Amyclae. It lasted nine days, from the 7th of the Carneian month (nearly corresponding with our August). In connexion with the praises of Apollo the story of Admetus would hold a prominent place. Callimachus in his *Hymn to Apollo* traces the progress of this festival from Sparta to the isle of Thera, and thence to the Greek colony of Cyrene on the coast of Africa. It was the *Carneia* that hindered the Lacedaemonians both at Marathon and Thermopylae (Hdt. vi. 106, vii. 206).

κυκλάς, a probable emendation for κύκλος, 'the circling season comes round.' [With the reading κύκλος, ὥρας is probably the acc. pl. after περινίσσεται, 'goes round the seasons,' though some take it as a gen. after μηνός.]

1. 452. λιπαραῖσι, a favourite epithet of Athens, whose inhabitants prided themselves on the sunny splendour of their city and their joyous happy life—ἀεὶ διὰ λαμπροτάτου βαίνοντες ἀβρῶς αἰθέρος (*Med.* 830). [Aristophanes, *Equites* 1329, has ὦ τὰ λιπαρὰ καὶ ἰοστέφανοι καὶ ἀριζήλωτοι Ἀθῆναι, but in the *Acharnians* l. 640 he rallies his fellow-citizens on their fondness for the epithet λιπαρός, which he says would apply equally well to anchovies or sardines!]

1. 457. τεράμνων. Cp. *Hippol.* 536 Πυθίοις τεράμνοισι. The word (also written τέρεμνον) is said to denote a solid edifice, from στέρεος with the loss of the initial σ. Cp. στέγος and *tegere*, *scutum* and κύτος, *στορ-έννυμι* and *torus*. But this etymology lacks proof.

1. 459. ποταμίᾳ νερτέρᾳ τε κώπᾳ = κώπῃ ποταμοῦ νερτέρου, 'the oar that dips in the stream of the under-world,' so that νερτέρᾳ agrees in sense with the gen. implied in ποταμίᾳ. Cp. *Soph. Elect.* 857 ἐλπίδων κοινοτόκων εὐπατρίδων τ' ἄρωγαί = ἐλπίδων κοινοῦ τόκου εὐπατρίδου, 'hopes from a noble brother.'

1. 460. φίλα γυναικῶν (like Homer's δῖα γυναικῶν, πότνα θεᾶων, &c.), 'dear among women.' Cp. *Virg. Aen.* iv. 576 'sancte deorum.' This construction has been imitated in English, e.g. 'precious of all trees,' *Milton P. L.* ix. 795.

1. 461. αὐτᾶς = σσαντᾶς. So with the first person, as in *Soph. Oed. Tyr.* 138 αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ (= ἔμαντοῦ) τοῦτ' ἀποσκεδῶ μύσος, and in the

plural, as in Plato, *Phaedo* xxv. δεῖ ἡμᾶς ἀνελεῖσθαι ἑαυτούς. The pronoun is simply reflexive, the person being indicated by the verb or some other word in the sentence; but it generally represents the third person.

ἀμείψαι, &c., i.e. 'rescue your husband from death by taking his place.' In l. 46 δάμαρτ' ἀμείψας meant 'putting his wife into his own place.' Ἀμείβειν means both 'to give' and 'to take in exchange,' but the middle is oftener used in the latter sense. See note on ἀμείψασθαι πύλας l. 752.

l. 463. κούφα σοι, &c. Cp. Tibullus ii. 4. 28 'terraque securae sit super ossa levis.' So in one of Byron's *Occasional Pieces*, the wish is expressed, 'Light be the turf of thy tomb,' and in another—

'O snatched away in beauty's bloom  
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb.'

In the *Helena* 852 Menelaus says that 'the gods make light the mould over the brave man's tomb.' This feeling, natural at all times, had a stronger significance when the departed spirit was believed to share the fortunes of the body. Lucian ridicules this belief, when he represents the shade of Mausolus as burdened by the weight of his marble monument.

l. 468. Here a line has been lost, containing the principal verb, and answering to l. 458 in the *strophe*. It may have repeated the statement that Alcestis died for her husband, or that Admetus was doomed to die.

l. 469. σχετλίω, 'hard-hearted.' Cp. l. 407. In l. 741 it means 'stout-hearted,' in l. 824 'miserable.' All these meanings spring from the original sense of 'bearing' and 'enduring,' implied in σχεῖν (ἔχω).

l. 473. τοιαύτης εἴη μοι, &c. A general sentiment, not suited to the persons of the Chorus, who are old men. Prof. Paley would render it, 'give me such a partner.'

συνδυάδος, adj. with ἀλόχου, 'such a dear wedded wife as this.'

[τό, corrected from the MS. reading τοῦτο to match δέ τι in the strophic line 463. See note on ἐκ δὲ τῶν l. 264, and cp. ll. 767, 937.]

l. 474. ἄλυπος, transitive, 'causing no sorrow,' as in *Bacchae* 432 οἶνον τέρψιν ἄλυπον. The passive sense 'unpained' is more common.

From l. 476 to l. 568 is the second 'episode' of the play. See note on l. 135. Enter HERACLES with his club and robe of lion-skin. He accosts the Chorus. The sudden change of scene at this moment is very effective.

Ll. 476-508. HERACLES. 'Is my lord Admetus within?' CHORUS. 'He is; but what quest brings thee hither?' HER. 'Eurystheus hath sent me to Thrace to fetch the horses of Diomedes.' CHO. 'Twill be a struggle of life

or death for thee; these steeds rend the flesh of men.' HER. 'I shun no toil, nor is this conflict my first. But their master—whose son is he?' CHO. 'The son of Ares.' HER. 'How persistent is my fate, always to fight with the children of Ares! But Alcmena's son never trembles at a foe.' CHO. 'Here is Admetus himself, the lord of this land.'

l. 476. *καμῆται*, 'villagers,' = *γείτονες*, i.e. dwellers in the district round Pherae. From very early times Thessaly comprised a number of separate communities (*πόλεις*), of which Pherae, Pharsalus, and Larissa were among the most important, each having its cluster of dependent villages.

l. 477. For the force of *ἄρα* in questions cp. ll. 229, 341 n.

*κιγχάνω*, prob. the subj. mood, 'may I (expect to) find;' but it may be the indicative, just as we say 'do I?' for 'shall I?'

*προσβῆναι* = *ὥστε προσβῆναι*, but the Greek infin., like the English, can express a result, very nearly equivalent to a purpose. This is imitated by Latin poets, as in Virg. *Aen.* i. 527 '*Libycos populare Penates venimus.*'

l. 481. *Τιρυνθίῳ*. Eurystheus was king of Mycenae, but both Tiryns and Mycenae were in the territory of Argos. Hence the epithets 'Argive,' 'Tirynthian,' and 'Mycenaeen' were promiscuously applied to Heracles and Eurystheus.

l. 482. *καὶ ποῦ*. See latter part of note on *καὶ πῶς* l. 142.

l. 483. *τέτρωρον ἄρμα*. Cp. l. 66. For *μέτα*, 'in quest of,' cp. l. 46 n. '*Ἄρμα* is the chariot and horses, or perhaps the horses alone; cp. *Hippol.* 1229 *τέτρωρον ἐκμαίνων ὄχον*. So in Virg. *Georg.* iii. 91 '*currus Achillei*' = 'equi.'

l. 484. *μῶν*, originally from *μὴ οὖν*, indicates surprise;—'Are you then ignorant?' implying 'surely you must be.'

l. 487. *ἀπειπεῖν*, lit. 'to say no to' anything, hence 'decline' or 'faint at,' from the idea of saying that one can do no more. Cp. l. 737 n. In the latter sense it usually takes the dative, and some MSS. read *τοῖς πόνοις* here. [But in *Andromache* 87 *ἀπαυδᾶς ἐν κακοῖς φίλοισι σοῖς* means 'you renounce' or 'fail your friends in trouble.']

l. 489. *πρῶτον*, in apposition with *ἀγῶνα*, = 'this would not be the first contest I have undertaken.' Cp. l. 648 *καλόν γ' ἂν τόνδ' ἀγῶν' ἡγωνίσω*, Soph. *Aias* 1121 *οὐ γὰρ βάνανσον τὴν τέχνην ἐκτησάμην*, 'it was no vulgar art I acquired.' This is called the 'Tertiary Predicate.'

l. 490. *ἂν κρατήσας*, &c., cp. l. 72 n.

l. 493. *εἰ μὴ γε*, &c., = *nisi forte*, '(easy enough) unless indeed, &c.' Cp. *Heracl.* 272, where Demophoon, being forbidden to strike a herald, answers *εἰ μὴ γ' ὁ κῆρυξ σωφρονεῖν μαθήσεται*, '(but I will) at least if he do not learn discretion.'

l. 494. λαίψηραῖς, 'ravenous,' properly 'quick-moving,' since λαίψηρός by loss of λ becomes αἰψηρός. Cp. λείβειν and εἵβειν and perhaps λαφύσσειν and ἀφύσσειν.

l. 496. Cp. *Herc. Fur.* 381 πώλους Διομήδεος, αἱ φονίαισι φάτναις ἀχάλιν' ἐθόραζον κάθαιμα σῖτα γέννσι, χαρμοναῖσιν ἀνδροβρῶσι δυστράπεζοι, also Ovid, *Met.* ix. 194—

'Quid quod Thracas equos humano sanguine pingues,

Plenaque corporibus laceris praesepeia vidi.'

This story was afterwards explained away, as meaning that Diomedes spent all his substance in breeding horses; hence they were called 'devourers of men.'

αἵμασιν, 'gouts of blood.' Cp. *Elect.* 1172 νεοφόνους ἐν αἵμασι. So in Virg. *Aen.* iv. 687 'atros siccabat veste cruores.'

l. 497. ὁ θρέψας, 'their keeper' or 'breeder.' Cp. Aristoph. *Nubes* 109 τοὺς φασιανοὺς οὓς τρέφει Λεωγόρας.

l. 498. ζαχρύσου πέλτης. Cp. *Rhesus* 370 τὴν ζάχρυσον πέλταν. [The intensive prefix ζα- in ζά-χρυσος, ζά-θεός, ζα-μενής, &c., is the same as δα- in δα-φινός, &c., and probably = διά, i.e. 'thorough.'] The gold-mines of Thrace were in the Pangaeian mountains between Scape Hyle and the Strymon. (Thuc. iv. 104.)

πέλτης may = πελταστῶν, as in *Rhes.* 410 ἔρρηξα πέλτην. So χιλή ἵππος Hdt. vii. 41, 'a thousand horse,' ἀσπὶς μυρία = ὀπλῖται, and in Latin *arma* often = *armati*. But it is perhaps simpler to take it here in its literal sense. Cp. κώπης ἀναξ Aesch. *Pers.* 380.

l. 499. τόνδε, &c., 'this labour you speak of (cp. l. 489 n.) is of a piece with my destiny,' i.e. to be always fighting with the sons of Ares.

l. 500. πρὸς αἶπος, 'uphill,' i.e. 'arduous.' Cp. *Hel.* 1443 ἔλκονσι δ' ἡμῖν πρὸς λέπας τὰς συμφοράς, 'as we drag our fortunes uphill.'

l. 501. εἰ χρή, 'since I must,' stating a fact. Cp. l. 327 n.

l. 502. Lycaon the son of Ares is not mentioned elsewhere, but Heracles is said to have slain a Lycaon, the son of Peleus king of Pylos, at the siege of that town. The combat with Cycnus is alluded to in *Herc. Fur.* 391, and related at length in the *Shield of Heracles*, ascribed to Hesiod.

l. 507. καὶ μὲν marks the entrance of a new character on the stage. Cp. ll. 611, 1006.

Enter ADMETUS. Ll. 509-567. ADM. 'Hail, thou son of Zeus!' HER. 'Admetus, all hail! But why this garb of mourning? Is any one dead? thy children or thy sire?' ADM. 'These are alive and well; it is my wife's state that troubles me.' HER. 'Speakest thou of her as alive or as dead?' ADM. 'Knowest thou not her destiny? how lives she then?' HER. 'Never grieve before the time; but tell me, who is dead?' ADM. 'Twas of a

woman I spoke,—an alien, yet most dear.' HER. 'Alas that I should find thee sorrowing! I will even go elsewhere.' ADM. 'That must not, that shall not be, Heracles! the guest-rooms are ready, and thou shalt have good cheer.' (Exit HERACLES.) ADM. 'Could I refuse the man who came to me as a guest? Or tell the truth, and so drive him from my doors? That were a blot upon my hospitable name, a calamity worse than all beside.'

1. 509. Alcmena, the mother of Heracles, was the daughter of Electryon, the son of Perseus, who claimed descent from Zeus.

1. 511. θέλοιμ' ἄν, sc. χαίρειν, in the sense of 'rejoice,' though Heracles had used it in the ordinary way of greeting. So in *Hec.* 426 Polyxena exclaims χαῖρ', ᾧ τεκοῦσα, to which Hecuba replies χαίρουσιν ἄλλοι, μητρί δ' οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε. [Cp. Livy i. 28 (story of Lucretia) 'quaerenti viro "Satin saluae?"' "Minime," inquit, "quid enim salvi est mulieris amissa pudicitia?"']

1. 512. τί χρῆμα πρέπεις; 'why dost thou appear?' Πρέπειν is 'to be conspicuous,' 'to show oneself,' &c. Cp. l. 1050, *Hel.* 1204 ὡς ἐσθῆτι δυσμόρφῳ πρέπει, Aesch. *Agam.* 30 δ φρυκτὸς πρέπει, 'the beacon is clear.' [The radical meaning of πρέπειν seems to be that of coming close to or pressing close upon the senses, generally of sight, but sometimes of hearing, as βοὴν πρέπειν Aesch. *Agam.* 312. Hence Conington in his note on *Agam.* 30 supposes it to be akin to *prope*, *proprius*, &c.]

1. 514. ἀπ' οὖν τέκνων. A preposition is often separated from its case by a participle such as οὖν, μέν, τοι, &c. Sometimes two or more words are interposed, as in Plato, *Crito* xii. πρὸς μὲν ἄρα σοι τὸν πατέρα. So in Demosthenes, περὶ μὲν τοίνυν, ἔφην ἐγώ, τούτου.

1. 516. ὠραῖος, 'of ripe age,' i.e. for the grave. Cp. *Phoen.* 968 αὐτὸς δ', ἐν ὠραίῳ γὰρ ἵσταμαι βίῳ, θνήσκειν ἔτοιμος. So the Lat. *tempestivus*, as in Virg. *Georg.* i. 250 'aut tempestivam silvis evertere pinum.'

1. 518. οὐ μὴν, &c., 'surely your wife Alcestis is not dead?'

1. 520. This question was too direct really to admit of evasion. The answer ἔστιν τε κοῦκέτ' ἔστιν is not, like that of the maidservant, l. 141, admissible under the circumstances, since Alcestis could not *now* in any possible sense be said to be alive.

1. 523. μοῖρας, for μοῖραν, by attraction into the case of the relative ἧς. Cp. Soph. *Trach.* 151 τότ' ἄν τις εἰσίδοιτο . . . κακοῖσιν οἷς βαρύνομαι. This kind of attraction rarely occurs, except when the antecedent would otherwise have been in the accusative.

1. 524. ὑφειμένην, 'submitted.' Euripides has been blamed for an oversight here in making Heracles aware of the self-sacrifice of Alcestis. See answer to this objection in the Introduction, p. xviii.

l. 525. ἤνεσεν, 'promised,' as in l. 12. See also l. 2 n.

l. 526. ἐς τόδε, lit. 'till the fact,' i.e. 'till the time comes.' [Some read τότε, without authority.]

l. 527. 'He who is doomed is (as one) dead, and he who is dead is no more.' The continuation of the argument would be 'but Alcestis is doomed, and therefore dead; hence I was right in saying οὐκέτ' ἔστιν of her.' But see note on l. 520.

l. 528. A blunt remark, going straight to the point;—'being and not being are generally considered different things.' χωρὶς νομίζεται, lit. 'are thought of apart.' Cp. Soph. Oed. Col. 808 χωρὶς τό τ' εἰπεῖν πολλὰ καὶ τὰ καίρια. So ἀμφὶς in Hom. Il. ii. 13 οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' ἀμφὶς ἀθάνατοι φράζονται, lit. 'do not think on two sides,' i.e. 'are not divided in opinion.'

l. 529. Admetus replies in effect—'I choose to regard a thing, when fated, as accomplished; you refuse to allow this, and each has a right to his own opinion.'

l. 530. Heracles, assuming that some one was really dead (and thus showing that he was not satisfied with Admetus' quibble, l. 521, and its pretended solution), asks τίς φίλων ὁ κατθανών; Admetus now enters on a new line of deception, turning upon the acceptance of the word ὀθνείος. Hence arises the natural mistake, by which Heracles afterwards excuses his behaviour (Il. 810, 828, 1014). It is not till he announces his intention of going elsewhere (l. 538) that Admetus drops his equivocal language, and devotes himself to the task of detaining his guest at all hazards.

l. 531. γυναικός, &c., 'it was a woman I meant just now,' i.e. 'when I spoke of burying a corpse.'

μνησθῆναι = *memorare*, 'to mention.'

l. 532. ὀθνείος, probably from ἔθνος, i.e. one of the same tribe or nation, but not a kinsman (συγγενής). The inhabitants of Iolcos (l. 249) and Phærae would belong to the same ἔθνος. [Some derive ὀθνείος by transposition from νοθείος (νόθος), i.e. 'a foreigner,' but the two words appear to be from different roots.]

l. 533. ἄλλως, 'besides,' or 'in another sense' (Paley). Cp. l. 333 n. ἀναγκαῖα, 'an intimate friend,' Lat. *necessaria*.

l. 537. ὑπορράπτεις, 'subjoin,' but also implying some hidden design. Both parts of the compound suggest this; ὑπό denotes crafty or 'under-hand dealing' (as ὑπήγετο, 'led him on craftily,' Xen. Anab. ii. 1. 18), and ῥάπτειν with its compounds (as μηχανορράφος, &c.) has the same force, from the notion of 'patching' or 'stitching.'

[This is illustrated in Artaphernes' remark to Histiaeus about the Ionic revolt (Hdt. vi. 1), τοῦτο τὸ ὑπόδημα ἔρραψας σύ, ἐκείνος δὲ ὑπεδήσατο, 'this shoe was of your stitching, but he put his foot into



it.' So *suere* in Latin, as in Terence, *Phorm.* iii. 2 'ne quid suo *suat* capiti,' whence *sutela*, 'a cunning trick.']

1. 538. With ξένων ἄλλην ἐστίαν (constituting the figure called *Hyphallage*) cp. Soph. *Aias* 860 πατρῶον ἐστίας βάθρον, *Trach.* 994 Κηναία κρηπὶς βωμῶν, &c. In such expressions the two substantives form one notion, with which the adjective agrees. [Another reading, of good authority, is ἄλλων for ἄλλην.]

1. 540. εἰ μόλοι, 'if he were to come,' sc. ἂν εἴη with ὀχληρός. Cp. Soph. *Aias* 921 ὥς ἀκμαῖος, εἰ βαίη, μόλοι, 'how timely would his coming be, if he were to arrive.'

1. 542. παρὰ κλαίουσι. A short final vowel is not usually lengthened before a mute and a liquid, unless the mute consonant be β, γ, or δ. Cp. ἄρᾱ κλύουσα *Elect.* 1058. Here the close connexion between the preposition and its case softens the effect. Before ρ a short α seems to be uniformly lengthened by Euripides, except in *Bacchae* 1338.

1. 546. σύ, to the attendant. Royal personages were usually attended on the stage by slaves. So in Aesch. *Choeph.* 712, Clytaemnestra, breaking off her conversation with Orestes, directs the servant ἄγ' αὐτὸν εἰς ἀνδρῶνας εὐξείνους δόμων. [For τῶνδε some read τῷδε, in reference to Heracles.]

ἐξωπίους, with δωμάτων, 'out of sight of these rooms.' Cp. 1. 543. In a large house there would be special ξενῶνες for the guests; otherwise some of the regular ἀνδρῶνες were used for the purpose. [From the street-door a vestibule led into a court (αὐλή), round which were the men's apartments, called *Andronitis*; opposite was another passage, closed by doors (θύραι μέσανλοι 1. 549), and leading to the αὐλή of the *Gynaeconitis*, or women's apartments. For a full description of a Greek house see Becker's *Charicles*, and the article *Domus* in Smith's *Dict. of Antiquities*.]

1. 548. ἐγκλήσατε, to the other servants, 'shut to' the doors. For the *imesis* in a compound verb cp. 11. 579 σὺν δ' ἐποιμαίνοντο, 901 σὺν ἂν ἔσχεν, *Hec.* 1172 ἐκ δὲ πηδήσας ἐγώ. It is a remnant of ancient usage, when prepositions were still recognised as local adverbs, and is common enough in Homer, but not in tragic dialogue. [Others translate ἐν, 'also,' a sense it sometimes bears, as in Soph. *Aias* 675 ἐν δ' ὁ παγκρατῆς ὕπνος λύει.]

1. 551. προσκειμένης, 'pressing upon you.' [Others read προκειμένης.]

11. 553, &c. In the *Choephori* Orestes, planning to get admission into the house of Aegisthus, says—

καὶ δὴ θυρωρῶν οὗτις ἂν παιδρᾷ φρενὶ

δέξαιτ', ἐπειδὴ δαιμονῶ δόμος κακοῖς,

and expects, as a matter of course, to be refused. This is in harmony

with the views of the Chorus here, and represents the normal state of Greek feeling on the subject. But Admetus exaggerates the duty of a host, nor does he take into account the feelings of his guest, who (as he presently admits, l. 565) would not have entered the house had he known the truth.

l. 557. Cp. ll. 1039, 1040, where the same sentiment is repeated to Heracles.

l. 559. τυγχάνω. Cp. l. 10 note. So in Homer *Il.* vi. 224, Diomedes says to Glaucus—

τῷ νῦν σοὶ μὲν ἐγὼ ξείνος φίλος Ἀργεῖ μέσσω  
εἰμὶ, σὺ δ' ἐν Λυκίῃ, ὅτε κεν τῶν δῆμον ἴκωμαι.

l. 560. δυψίαν. Wordsworth, *Hist. of Greece*, observes of the district between Nauplia and Mycenae, 'The plain over which we pass is dry and dusty, and has few objects to relieve its bare level. . . The higher parts of this plain suffer from want of water, whence the epithet applied to it by Homer (πολυδίψιον), indicative of the thirstiness of the soil.'

l. 561. πῶς = τί; 'how came you to hide?' &c.

l. 565. καὶ τῷ, i.e. to Heracles. [This has been altered to καὶ τῷ, indefinite, 'to some one.']

l. 566. οὐκ ἐπίσταται (with infin. only), 'does not understand,' i.e. 'cannot.' Cp. Soph. *Trach.* 543 ἐγὼ δὲ θυμοῦσθαι μὲν οὐκ ἐπίσταμαι νοσοῦντι.

ll. 568-605. CHORUS. 'O house ever large and free! in thee Phoebus once deigned to dwell, piping to the flocks upon thy downs. At whose glad music the wild creatures of the grove stood entranced, and came tripping to the sound of the lyre. Wherefore thy master hath flocks and herds in abundance, and broad lands beside the Boebian mere. And now in nobleness of soul hath he taken into his house a guest, though his eye is moist with weeping. Surely in the good all wisdom dwells, and the pious man shall prosper in his days.'

l. 569. ᾧ, with the nom. *admirantis est potius quam compellantis*. Cp. l. 1 n., but here the address is continued in σέ τοι, &c.

l. 570. τοι emphasises σέ, 'thee' beyond all others.

εὐλύρας, in contrast to συνρίζων (l. 576).

l. 572. ἔτλα. See on ἔτλην l. 1. In σοῖσι there seems to be a transition from the house to Admetus, who is the real object of the address. [Or δόμοις may be the separate parts, 'halls' or 'chambers' of the οἶκος.] From this legend Apollo had the title of νόμος, according to Callimachus, *Hymn to Apollo* 46. Cp. Theocr. *Id.* xxv. 22 Ἀπόλλωνος νομίοιο.

l. 575. δοχμῶν, 'sloping,' the opposite of ὀρθός. See on δοχμῶν κέλευθον l. 1000.

l. 578. ποιμνίτας ὑμεναίους, 'pastoral strains;' properly 'marriage songs,' love being the shepherd's favourite theme.

l. 579. σὺν, i.e. with the flocks. So Ovid, *Fasti* ii. 88, represents



the hind consorting with the lioness to hear Arion's music. For the *tnesis* of preposition and verb cp. l. 548 n.

βαλιαί, 'spotted,' *lynxes variae* in Virg. *Georg.* iii. 264. Cp. *Iph. in Aul.* 222 πώλους λευκοστίκτω τριχὶ βαλιούς. So βαλιὼν ἔλαφον *Hec.* 90, βαλιαῖσι πώλοις *Rhesus* 356. [In the last two passages it is sometimes rendered 'swift,' a sense which it must bear in the phrase πνοιὰ βαλιῶν ἀνέμων. The primary idea (from βάλλειν) seems to be that of spots cast or dashed upon a ground colour, hence the varying play of light upon a coloured surface (cp. 'shot' silk). The transition to 'swift' is easy. So αἰύλος means both 'quick-moving' and 'variegated.']

l. 580. λεόντων. This is no poetical exaggeration. Aristotle, *Hist. Animal.* vi. 31, says there are no lions in Europe, except between the Achelous and the Nestus; this would include Thessaly.

l. 581. δαφινός, 'tawny.' Cp. Hom. *Il.* ii. 308 δράκων ἐπὶ νῶτα δαφινός, xi. 474 δαφινοὶ θῶες, Aesch. *Prom.* 1022 δαφινὸς ἀετός. [Some translate it 'murderous,' but it is doubtful whether δαφινός ever has properly this meaning. 'Blood-stained,' or 'bloody,' appears to be its primary sense, and this passed into the more general one of 'dark-coloured,' 'tawny,' or 'black.'] The prefix δα- is the same as ζα- in ζά-χρυσος, &c. See l. 498 n.

l. 582. In χόρευσε the augment is omitted, as in δέξατο l. 598, δίκη, τέκετο *Phoen.* 641 and elsewhere in choral odes. This licence is not used in iambic lines, except in the narratives of messengers, as κυκλοῦτο, σίγησε, γυμνοῦντο *Bacch.* 1066, 1084, 1134. Such instances must not be confounded with those where the augment is elided after a long vowel, as ἐνταῦθα δὴ ᾽δάκρυσεν l. 176.

l. 585. πέραν βαίνουσα, &c., 'stepping out beyond the pine-forests' into the open lawns between.

l. 588. τοίγαρ, i.e. *because* Apollo had blessed the land with his presence.

l. 589. οἰκεῖ, sc. Admetus, the real subject of the ode. \* The address to Phoebus (from l. 582) is parenthetical.

l. 590. Homer, *Il.* ii. 270, places the home of Admetus παραὶ Βοιβηίδα λίμνην.

ἀρότοις γυῶν = γυῶις ἀροσίμοις, 'plough-lands' as distinguished from πεδίων δαπέδοις, 'pasture-lands.'

l. 591. ὄρον, in apposition to αἰθέρα, 'he sets as a limit . . . the clime of the Molossi.'

ἄελιον, &c., 'the dusky stable of the sun,' i.e. 'where the sun stables his steeds at dusk,' meaning 'the west.'

l. 594. αἰθέρα, fem., as in *Elect.* 991, *Androm.* 1228. Aeschylus always has it masculine; also Sophocles, except in *Oed. Tyr.* 866. The dominion of Admetus can hardly have extended as far as the

Molossi, who occupied the central region of Epirus. But it may have reached to the eastern side of the Pindus range, which bounds Thessaly on the west.

l. 595. Αἰγαίωνα (for the old reading Αἰγαῖον), the name of the sea-god for the sea itself. Some take it as an adj. with ἀκτάν, 'the harbourless Aegean sea-coast of Pelion,' others make πόντιον Αἰγαίωνα = Αἰγαῖον πόντον,—'he sways the Aegean main as far as the harbourless coast of Pelion.' [Aegaeon was the same as Briareus (Hom. *Il.* i. 403); he was the personification of storms and earthquakes, and his name probably means 'violent' or 'rushing,' from ἀτσσω.]

l. 601. ἐκφέρεται, &c. 'is self-impelled towards,' i. e. 'tends to produce a sense of honour.' Αἰδώς is that self-respect (*verecundia*) that causes a man to regard the feelings of others; and this is an especial mark of good breeding (εὐγενές)—τὸ γὰρ τραφῆναι μὴ κακῶς αἰδῶ τρέφει *Συφρί.* 913. Compare the maxim *noblesse oblige*.

[l. 603. All the MSS. insert ἄγαμαι after σοφίας *extra metrum*, but it is doubtless interpolated.]

l. 604. ἦσται, 'sits enthroned.' Cp. Aesch. *Agam.* 950 θάρσος εὐπιθὲς ἵζει φρενὸς φίλον θρόνον.

l. 605. κεδνὰ πράξειν, 'will fare well.' Cp. *Troad.* 679 πράξειν τε κεδνόν, also (for adverbial neut. pl.) *Il.* 412, 445, *Orest.* 531 ἔπραξεν ἔνδικα.

From l. 606 to l. 961 constitutes the third *Episode* of the play. See on l. 136. Meanwhile Admetus has been making preparations for the funeral. He re-enters, inviting the Chorus to join in the obsequies. The procession is stopped by the sudden entrance of Pheres (l. 614).

l. 606. Φεραίων εὐμενῆς παρουσία = Φεραῖοι εὐμενῶς παρόντες. So in *Soph. Trach.* 964 ξένων ἐξόμιλος βάσις = ξένοι ἐξερχόμενοι.

l. 607. πάντα, i. e. τὰ πρόσφορα l. 148. See note on κόσμος l. 149.

l. 608. ἄρδην (from αἶρω with adv. suffix -δην, as in κρύβ-δην, &c.), 'aloft,' i. e. on their shoulders. Cp. λαβεῖν ἀέρδην Aesch. *Agam.* 226.

In τάφον καὶ πυράν the order of proceeding is reversed. See note on Greek burial rites, l. 366.

l. 609. ὡς νομίζεται, referring to the usual χαῖρε at funerals (l. 625). So the Romans repeated *Vale* three times. The Chorus obeys this injunction at l. 743, after the dispute with Pheres.

l. 610. ὑστάτην ὁδόν, i. e. the journey to Hades, not the procession to the grave. Cp. *Soph. Antig.* 807 τὰν νεάταν ὁδὸν στείχουσιν.

l. 611. For καὶ μὴν introducing a fresh speaker see l. 507 n.

l. 613. κόσμον, &c. Cp. l. 149 n. The νέρτεροι were not only the gods of the lower world, but the spirits of the dead also, who were regarded as δαίμονες (l. 1140) requiring propitiation (l. 25 n.). Hence in Aesch. *Persae* 609 the offerings Atossa brings to the tomb of Darius are called πρεμνεῖς χοαί and νεκροῖσι μελικτήρια.

Enter PHERES, with a train of attendants, 614-746. PHERES. 'I come to share thy mourning. Take these ornaments for the dead; since she is worthy of all respect, the saviour of our house.' ADMETUS, 'Who bade thee hither? I will take nought from thee, who didst desert thy son in his distress, old though thou art, and she so young! Sure I am no child of thine, nor shall this hand inter thy corpse. 'Tis the way of old men; they murmur at long life, yet shrink from death when he comes.' PHERES. 'Am I thy slave, that thou revilest me thus? Hear this in return. I owe thee not my life, nor do I claim thine. A father die for his son? 'tis not in nature nor in custom. Life is as sweet to me as to thee. Thou art the coward, not I, thou less than woman! Cease, lest thou hear truths not to thy liking.' ADM. 'Say on; take thy fill of life, since thou wouldst not save hers or mine.' PHER. 'Lay not her death at my door, the blame is thine own.' ADM. 'And thine the disgrace: coward, thou wilt die inglorious!' PHER. 'What then?' ADM. 'Hast thou no shame? depart, and let me be.' PHER. 'I go; but thou shalt smart for it yet.' ADM. 'Take thy wife and begone! this house is no home for you. (Exit PHERES.) Perform we the last rites.' Exit ADMETUS.

CHORUS. 'Farewell, noblest one; Hermes speed thee on thy way, and may all happiness in Hades' realms be thine!'

l. 615. Cp. ll. 418, 1083 γυναῖκος ἐσθλῆς ἡμπλακες.

[l. 617. For δύσφορα some read δυσμενῇ, which is rarely used of things. Cp. however Soph. *Elect.* 440 δυσμενεῖς χοάς.]

l. 618. κατὰ χθονὸς ἵτω. The trinkets, &c., when burnt or buried with the corpse, were supposed to accompany the spirit to Hades.

l. 620. ἥτις, *quippe quae*, 'because she, &c.' Cp. l. 659.

l. 621. οὐκ with ἀπαιδα, not with the verb, 'prevented my becoming childless.'

l. 623. εὐκλέεστατον, 'of highest repute.' The reputation of women at Athens was not high in the time of Euripides. [Another reading is εὐκλεέστερον.]

l. 625. ἡμᾶς, i. e. the whole family, of which Admetus was the hope and stay.

l. 628. λύει = λυσιτελεῖ, 'profits.' The full phrase is λύειν τέλη, 'to pay dues,' and so clear oneself of liabilities. Cp. Soph. *Oed. Tyr.* 316 ἔνθα μὴ τέλη λύει φρονούντι.

ἢ, 'or else,' *alioquin*. The Greeks had a proverb, ἢ τοιαύτην χρὴ γαμεῖν ἢ μὴ γαμεῖν.

l. 630. ἐν φίλοις, lit. 'among the things I love,' i. e. 'nor do I love thy presence.'

l. 632. τῶν σὼν ἐνδεής, 'needing anything of thine,' i. e. 'beholden to thee for anything.'

l. 633. ὠλλύμην (imperf.), 'I was in danger of perishing.' Cp. *Iph.*

in *Tauris* 27 ἐκαινόμενον ξίφει, 'I was on the point of being sacrificed,' *ib.* 60 ὅτ' ἄλλωμην ἐγώ.

1. 634. ἄλλω, masculine, because the general idea of a substitute is more prominent than that of the actual person, Alcestis. So ἄλλου σωτήρης l. 666.

1. 636. τοῦδε σώματος, 'this body of mine,' more emphatic than ἐμοῦ. So in *Herac.* 528 Macaria says, ἡγείσθ' ὅπου δεῖ σῶμα κατθανεῖν τόδε.

ἄρα marks an inference from Pheres' conduct, 'so then you were not,' or 'after all.' Cp. Soph. *Philoct.* 978, where Philoctetes, discovering Odysseus, exclaims, ὅδ' ἦν ἄρα, 'so it was *he* after all!' So *ergo* in Latin, as in Hor. *Od.* i. 24, 5 'Ergo Quinctilium perpetuus sopor urget?'

1. 639. ὑπεβλήθην. Hence the terms τέκνα ὑποβολιμαῖα for 'supposititious,' or substituted children, as in Hdt. i. 137 and elsewhere.

1. 640. εἰς ἐλεγχον, 'to the test,' said of persons coming forth to be examined in court. Cp. l. 15 n.

ὅς εἰ, *qui sis*, = οἷός εἰ, 'your true character.'

1. 643. τηλικόσδε, 'old as you are.' So in Soph. *Antig.* 726 Creon says in answer to his son's remonstrance, 'Shall I *at my age* (οἱ τηλικοίδε) be taught my duty by a mere stripling (πρὸς τηλικούδε)?'

1. 644. οὐκ ἠθέλησας, 'you did not choose' (though you had the power). Cp. l. 281 n.

1. 645. εἰάσατε. By using the plural verb Admetus includes his mother in his censure.

1. 646. ὀθνεῖαν. See l. 532 n.

1. 647. πατέρα τ' ἄν, a correction of the old reading πατέρα τέ γε. The first ἄν gives warning that the sentence is going to be conditional, and also emphasises πατέρα. Cp. *Hippol.* 480 ἦ τὰρ' ἄν ὑπέ γ' ἄνδρες ἐξεύροιεν ἄν. In Aristoph. *Acharn.* 212 this usage is ludicrously exaggerated, where the Chorus, enraged with Dicaeopolis, exclaim οὐκ ἄν ὑπ' ἐμῆς γε νεότητος . . . ᾧδε φαύλως ἄν οὗτος . . . ἐξέφυγεν, οὐδ' ἄν ἐλαφρῶς ἄν ἀπεπλίστατο.

1. 648. The position of καλόν makes it emphatic; 'fair strife had been thine to strive' (Browning). Cp. l. 489 n. Pheres answers this at l. 683.

1. 650. πάντως with βραχύς, 'short in any case.'

1. 653. καὶ μὴν, 'and indeed,' or 'and yet' you have had prosperity enough to satisfy any man. Cp. l. 1099. Admetus here passes on to answer a possible objection (which Pheres actually does make at l. 691), that an old man might well wish to enjoy his short remnant of life.

1. 657. διαρπάσαι, *ad diripiendum*. The Greek infin. is more elastic than the Latin, and more like the English. It may even express a purpose, as in Hom. *Il.* vii. 351 Ἀργείην Ἑλένην . . . δώσωμεν Ἀτρεΐδῃσιν ἄγειν. Cp. l. 480 n. The verb διαρπάσαι well describes the rush

of needy relatives upon the unprotected house, which they make their prey. Cp. Ovid's picture of the suitors rioting in the house of Ulysses during his absence (*Heroides* i. 89)—

'Inque tua regnant, nullis prohibentibus, aula;  
Viscera nostra, tuae dilaniantur opes.'

l. 658. οὐ μὴν ἐρεῖς, &c., 'you surely will not say that from disrespect to your old age I gave you up to death.' This Admetus had done in intent by making the request (ll. 15, 16). [Others read ἀτιμάζοντα and προὔδωκας, 'that you abandoned me to my fate, because I did not respect your age.']

l. 659. ὅστις, 'since I have always been,' &c. See note on ἦτις l. 620. αἰδόφρων, 'respectful.' For αἰδώς see l. 601 n.

l. 661. ἡλλαξάτην, 'paid in return.' For ἀλλάσσειν, ἀμείβειν, &c., words denoting exchange, cp. ll. 14, 461 n.

l. 662. οὐκέτ' ἂν φθάνοις, 'you cannot now be too soon,' i. e. 'lose no time about getting.' Cp. Aristoph. *Plutus* 1133 ἀποτρέχων οὐκ ἂν φθάνοις.

ll. 663, 664. Cp. *Medea* 1032-1034—

ἦ μὴν ποθ' ἡ δύστηνος εἶχον ἐλπίδας  
πολλὰς ἐν ὑμῖν γηροβοσκήσειν τ' ἐμέ,  
καὶ καθανοῦσαν χερσὶν εὖ περιστελεῖν.

There was a law at Athens ἐάν τις μὴ τρέφῃ τοὺς γονέας, ἄτιμος ἔστω.

The technical term for 'dressing' the corpse before burial (see on l. 149) was *περιστέλλειν* (*ornare*). This was done by the women of the family. Then the body was 'laid out' (*προτίθεσθαι*) to certify the fact of death. See FUNUS in *Dict. of Antiquities*.

l. 666. τοῦπὶ σέ (τὸ ἐπὶ σέ), *quantum in te fuit*, i. e. 'it is no thanks to you that I am alive.' Cp. *Hec.* 514 ἡμεῖς δ' ἄτεκνοι τοῦπὶ σέ.

For the masc. ἄλλου (and κείνου next line) see l. 634 n. He means to say, 'You have forfeited all claim to my regard; the duty I once owed to you I now transfer to another.'

ll. 669-672. These lines (only with πολύν for μακρόν) recur in a fragment of Menander. There is an evident allusion to the fable of the Old Man and Death.

l. 671. οὐδ' | εἰς βού | λεται. This violates the rule that a spondee in the fifth foot must consist of one word, or of two words closely connected (as ἄκου | σόν μου | πάτερ), unless the first half of the spondee be a monosyllable. [Hence Porson proposed οὐδ' | εἰς βού | λεται.] But this rule is not always observed. Cp. *Ion* 1, *Heracl.* 530. [The MS. reading ὦ παῖ (for ὦναξ) may have come in by error from ὦ παῖ in next line.]

l. 674. παροξύνῃς, 'exasperate,' whence our word *paroxysm*. The Chorus performs its proper function, according to Horace, *A. P.* 196—

'Ille bonis faveatque et consilietur amice,  
Et regat iratos et amet pacare tumentes.'

1. 675. αὐχεῖς with ἐλαύνειν, 'whom do you presume you are assailing?' For αὐχεῖν, 'to assert confidently,' 'boast,' &c., see l. 95 n.

Λυδὸν ἢ Φρύγα. Asia Minor was the great slave-mart of Greece and Rome. In Xen. *Anab.* iii. 1, 31 one Apollonides is taunted with having his ears bored, like a Lydian slave. There was a Latin proverb, 'Phrygem plagis fieri solere meliorem.'

1. 676. κακοῖς ἐλαύνειν, = 'probris agitare.' Cp. *Androm.* 31 κακοῖς . . . σχετλίοις ἐλαύνομαι.

σέθεν may be the possess. gen. 'slave of yours,' or with ἀργυρώνητον, 'bought with your money.' The gen. of the agent usually takes a preposition, but there are several instances like πατρὸς τραφεῖς *Soph Philoct.* 3, πληγῆς θυγατρὸς *Orest.* 497.

1. 678. γνησίως, 'free-born,' not enfranchised or having purchased liberty. See Acts xxii. 28.

1. 679. νεανίας, 'headstrong,' 'insolent.' This use of the word would be familiar at Athens, where the fashionable young men of the day were in the habit of committing assaults upon respectable citizens. A gross case is recorded by Demosthenes, in which the defendant belonged to a regular set, called the Triballi, like the 'Mohocks' of the last century.

1. 680. With βαλὼν, probably supply λόγους; but βάλλειν may be used absolutely, 'to assault,' as in Plato, *Symposium*, βαλὼν γε οἷε ἐκφεύξεσθαι.

οὕτως, 'as you are,' i. e. 'with impunity.' Cp. *Heracl.* 375 οὐκ οὕτως ἂν δοκεῖς κυρήσεις, 'you shan't get just what you expect.'

1. 682. οὐκ, with ὀφείλω, but transposed for emphasis, 'bound I am not.' Cp. *Hērpol.* 407 χρῆν μὲν οὐ σ' ἀμαρτάνειν, *Bacch.* 1348 ὀργὰς πρέπει θεοὺς οὐχ ὁμοιοῦσθαι βροτοῖς.

11. 683, 684. Contrast the language of Andromache, *Andr.* 410, ἐμοὶ δ' ὄνειδος μὴ θανεῖν ὑπὲρ τέκνου, also Evander's exclamation on the death of his son, 'vivendo vici mea fata' Virg. *Aen.* xi. 160.

Ἑλληνικόν, i. e. not like barbarians, who kill the old and infirm when they become useless. Yet the principle of rating men's lives according to their usefulness to the state was fully recognized in Greece, and to be ἄχρειος, 'unservicable,' was a great reproach. See Introduction, p. xvi.

1. 685. σαυτῷ, i. e. to shift for yourself, and not be dependent on me.

1. 687. For the extent of Admetus' domains see ll. 588, &c.

1. 690. τοῦδ' ἀνδρός, common in tragedy for ἐμοῦ. Cp. ll. 331, 719, 1084. So in Hor. *Sat.* i. 9, 47 'hunc hominem' = me.

1. 691. Quoted by Aristophanes against Euripides in *Thesmoph.* 194, and parodied in the *Clouds* 1415, where a son justifies himself for beating his father by pleading κλαίουσι παῖδες· πατέρα δ' οὐ κλαίνει δοκεῖς;

1. 692. ἡ μὴν, 'I can assure you.' Cp. l. 64 n.

1. 694. σὺ γοῦν, &c., 'you at least (ought to admit this since) you fought so shamelessly for your life.'

διεμάχου τὸ μὴ θανεῖν is literally 'you fought hard not to die.'

l. 697. γυναικός, the gen., because ἡσσημένος virtually = the compar. ἡσσων, 'worsted by' or 'inferior to' a woman. Cp. *Hec.* 1252 ἡσσημένος δούλης.

l. 698. τοῦ, expressing scorn, 'fine manly youth that you are!' Or perhaps (as Mr. Browning translates) '*her* handsome spark,' referring to Alcestis.

l. 700. αἰεί, 'for the time being,' a frequent sense of the word. Cp. Aesch. *Prom.* 937 τὸν κρατοῦντ' αἰεί. [Livy in his Preface has '*semper scriptores*,' meaning 'successive historians.']

l. 702. τοῖς μὴ θέλουσι, 'if they do not choose,' i.e. *anyone* who does not. Οὐ would point to some particular friends as instances. 'Ο μὴ δρῶν = *si quis non faciat*, ὁ οὐ δρῶν = *is qui non facit*.

l. 705. κακά, 'reproaches,' as in l. 676.

ll. 706, 707. See note on l. 673. πλείω, 'too many,' a common force of the comparative. The standard of comparison (here τοῦ δέοντος) is understood.

l. 708. ὥς ἐμοῦ λέξαντος, 'since I have had my say' (Paley). He does not mean to speak any more at length; only a few sentences are spoken on each side before they part. [Others read λέγοντος, 'since I *shall* say what I choose.']

l. 710. ἄν belongs to the verb, but reflects its force on the participle also. Cp. l. 490 n.

l. 712. ψυχῇ-μιᾷ, &c., i.e. our own natural lives, and not another's in addition.

l. 713. καὶ μὴν, &c. 'you however would live (if you could) longer than Zeus,' in spite of your protest about being content with 'one life.' Or = imperative, 'live on' for all I care (Paley).

l. 714. ἀρᾷ. The curse consists in the tone, and the implied misery of old age (l. 715). Thus Tithonus, in the old legend, found immortality a curse. Compare what Swift says in *Gulliver's Travels* about the Struldbrugs in the kingdom of Luggnagg.

l. 715. γάρ, &c., 'why I saw,' &c. Cp. St. Matt. xxvii. 23 τί γὰρ κακὸν ἐποίησε;

l. 717. σημεῖα, in apposition to the general notion of the sentence, τὸ ἐμὲ τόνδε νεκρὸν ἐκφέρειν, rather than with νεκρὸν only. For the plural see l. 1028 n.

l. 722. θεοῦ, the Sun-god. as the source of light, and the visible representative of deity. See l. 207 n.

l. 723. κοῦκ ἐν ἀνδράσιν = 'unmanly.' Ἐν denotes likeness or uniformity. Compare the French '*voyager en prince*,' 'to travel in a princely style.' Cp. l. 732.



l. 724. Pheres means that Admetus is baulked of the pleasure he had expected to enjoy in burying his poor old father.

l. 726. *κακῶς ἀκούειν*, *male audire*, 'to be in evil repute.' This disregard of fame after death Admetus calls 'effrontery' (*ἀναΐδεια*).

l. 728. *ἄφρονα*, 'weak' or 'simple,' in dying for you.

l. 731. *κηδεσταῖς*, relations by marriage (*κηδος*). The duty of avenging his sister's death would devolve on Acastus. This was a sacred duty, and stringently enforced; no one but a kinsman might perform it.

l. 732. *ἐν ἀνδράσιν*. Pheres retorts upon Admetus in his own words (l. 723): 'Acastus surely is not worthy the name of a *man*, unless,' &c.

l. 733. *τιμωρεῖσθαι* usually takes an acc. of the thing *for* which vengeance is taken, as well as of the personal object. But sometimes the former is put in the gen., as *ἐγὼ σφεας τιμωρήσομαι τῆς ἐνθάδε ἀπίστου* Hdt. iii. 145.

l. 734. *ἔρροις*, = *abi in malam rem*, a sort of imprecation. Admetus does not say *ἡ μήτηρ*, having already repudiated both his parents, ll. 636, 666.

l. 735. *παιδὸς ὄντος*, prob. the gen. absolute, 'childless, though your son lives.' [It may be governed by *ἄπαιδε*, like *παίδων ἄπαιδας Androm.* 612. Cp. *ἄπειλος φαρέων Phoen.* 324, *ἀψόφητος κοκκυμάτων Soph. Aias* 321.]

l. 736. *τῷδε* = *ἐμοί*, as in l. 690, to be taken after *ταῦτόν*, 'the same roof *with* me.' So *idem* takes the dat. as in Hor. *A. P.* 567 'invitum qui servat *idem* facit *occidenti*.'

l. 737. *νεῖσθε* = *ibitis*, *νεῖσθαι*, like *ἵεναι*, having a future sense.

*ἀπειπεῖν*, 'to disown.' See on l. 487.

*κηρύκων ὑπο*, i.e. like a formal declaration of war. The technical term for disinheriting was *ἀποκηρύξαι*.

l. 739. *ἡμεῖς δέ*, to the Chorus and attendants.

*τοῖν ποσίν*, 'the present.' Cp. *Troad.* 938 *τὰν ποσὶν λέγειν*. So *πρὸ ποδός*, *παρὰ ποδός*, &c. Cp. 'quod ante pedes est' Ter. *Adelphi* iii. 4, 22.

l. 740. *ὥς ἄν* expresses a purpose with some implied condition, generally the *consent* of the person addressed, = 'that (so please you) we may place.' Hence the difference between *ὥς* and *ὥς ἄν* is often very slight. For the funeral ceremonies see l. 366 n.

l. 741. *σχετλία*, 'unflinching.' For the meanings of *σχέτλιος* see on l. 470, and cp. *ἔτλην* l. 1.

*τόλμης*, gen. of respect. Cp. *σχέτλιος παθέων Androm.* 1179, *τλήμων τόλμης Ion* 260, &c. So with interjections, as *οἶμοι τῶν κακῶν*, &c. Latin writers imitate this construction, as *infelix animi*, *laeta laborum*, &c.



1. 743. *χθόνιος*, the title of Hermes as conductor of souls to Hades (*ψυχαγωγός*) as distinguished from *οὐράνιος*, his title in heaven. So Plutarch says, *τῶν μὲν χθόνιος ὁ Ἑρμοῦ τῶν δὲ οὐράνιος*. Cp. Hor. *Od.* i. 10, 17 'tu pias laetis animas reponis sedibus.'

1. 744. *ἐκεῖ*, 'yonder,' like *ἐκεῖσε* l. 363, a common euphemism for the world of spirits. Cp. Soph. *Elect.* 356 *εἴ τις ἔστ' ἐκεῖ χάρις*.

1. 745. *ἀγαθοῖς*, &c. Compare the splendid apostrophe of Tacitus to the dead Agricola, *Agric.* 46, 'si quis *piorum* manibus locus, si . . . non cum corpore extinguntur magnae animae, placide quiescas,' &c. Euripides here places Alcestis on a level with the heroes, for whom special honours were reserved; that of being co-assessor (*πάρεδρος*) with Hades and Persephone being the highest of all.

As the Chorus sing this farewell ode, they move slowly off the stage. The Chorus rarely went off in the course of a play; it does so however in the *Helena* 386, and in Soph. *Aias* 814.

Enter SERVING-MAN (one of the *ἐφεστῶτες* mentioned in l. 547), to Heracles sitting at his meal.

LL. 747-860. SERVANT. 'A ruder guest than this Heracles have I never seen! entering my master's house in spite of our sorrow; then falling to at the feast and the wine, with uncouth songs, and a garland on his brow—we mourning for our mistress all the while, who was a mother to us all. How I hate him! and justly too—the villain!' HERACLES. 'Ho, there! why those doleful looks, that frowning brow? all for a stranger too! Come hither and be wise. All men (thou know'st) must die; and fortune is fickle. Drink then with me and be merry; put off thy gloom, while thou mayest; else life is not worth the living.' SERV. 'This is no time for mirth; knowest thou not our trouble?' HER. 'A stranger (so he told me) died here but now.' SERV. 'A home friend rather.—But leave us to our mourning.' HER. (aside) 'Am I deceived? (To the Servant.) Who is dead here? the truth, I pray.' SERV. 'Tis my lord's wife, Alcestis, that is gone.' HER. 'How sayest thou?—And then to make me your guest?' SERV. 'Nay, he would have it so.' HER. 'What a tale hath he put upon me! else would I never——. (He dashes the chaplet on the ground.) Where is the tomb, the tomb, I say?' SERV. 'Yonder, up the hill, Larissa-wards.' Exit SERVANT. HER. 'Courage, heart of mine; now show thy pedigree! I will seek Death at the tomb and deliver her from his hands: strong though he be, he shall not hold his prey. All this and more for his sake, who is my best friend, my most noble host.'

1. 747. *παντοίας*, 'every sort of land,' barbarian as well as Greek.

1. 752. *ἀμείψασθαι*, 'to pass,' lit. 'to change' one's position from outside to inside, or *vice versa*. Thus in *Elect.* 750 *ἀμείψων δώματα* means 'leave the house,' but in Aesch. *Choeph.* 573 *ἀμείψω βαλόν* is 'I will cross the threshold.' See on *ἀμείψαι* l. 461.

1. 754. τὰ προστυχόντα, 'what was set before him.' Admetus had ordered σίτων παρῆναι πλῆθος (l. 548), but it seems this was not enough. The voracity attributed to Heracles is quite a common-place with the comic poets, the titles ἀδηφάγος, βουφάγος, &c. being freely applied to him. Aristophanes has an amusing scene in the *Frogs*, 549, &c., and Epicharmus in his *Busiris* describes the gluttony of Heracles and his bestial manner of eating. Lucian represents him as a god who does not care for 'smokeless offerings,' but likes plenty of good meat. All this is part of his character as an *athlete*, according to Greek ideas of training-diet, which ran decidedly in the direction of over-feeding.

1. 755. εἰ, with opt. = *si quando*, 'whenever we did not bring anything, he would urge us (imperf.) to do so.'

1. 756. χεῖρεσσι. This Epic form also occurs in Soph. *Antig.* 1297. Such forms are rare in iambic lines; here it suits the mock heroic tone the servant is made to assume in this and the following lines, which have been thought to be borrowed from some *scolium*, or drinking song.

κίσσινον, probably 'made of ivy-wood,' since Euripides speaks of a σκύφος κισσοῦ in *Cyclops* 390. It is called κισσύβιον in Hom. *Od.* ix. 346, and Theocr. *Id.* i. 27. [Potter renders it 'wreathed with ivy,' which is possible.]

1. 757. μητρός, i.e. the grape, dark wine being reputed strongest; or it may be the vine. Anacreon calls wine γόνον ἀμπέλου. Cp. Aesch. *Persae* 620 ἀκῆρατόν τε μητρός ἀγρίας ἀπο ποτόν, παλαιᾶς ἀμπέλου γάνος τόδε. So in Plautus, *Amphitryon* i. 1, 174 'eam ego (hirneam), ut matre fuerat natum, eduxi meri.'

εὐζωρον, prob. from ζοερός, 'lively;' hence = ἀκρατος, 'unmixed,' i.e. 'strong' wine. A drunkard was said ζωρότερον πίνειν.

1. 758. ἐθέρμηνε, past tense in connexion with the *historical* pres. πίνει (l. 757).

ἀμφιβᾶσα, 'getting round him,' like a flame encircling a caldron. This, and ll. 760 &c., may be compared with *Cyclops* 424 ἐγὼ δὲ . . . σπλάγχν' ἐθέρμαινον ποτῶ· ᾧ δὲ παρὰ κλαίουσι συνναύταις ἐμοῖς ἄμουσα.

1. 759. μυρσίνης. Cp. l. 172 n. Here the myrtle is festive, being sacred to Venus. See Hor. *Od.* i. 38, 6; ii. 7, 23, &c.

1. 762. προτιμῶν, 'caring for.' Cp. l. 155 n.

1. 764. τέγγοντες. For the participle after δεικνύναι and similar verbs see ll. 150, 155, 439 n.

ἐφίετο (imperf.), 'repeatedly enjoined us.'

1. 767. πανούργον, 'rascally.' For derivation see Lexicon. Aristotle, *Ethics* vi. 12, defines πανουργία thus:—'There is a faculty called cleverness (δεινότης), which can avail itself of every possible means towards a given object. If the object be good, the faculty is praiseworthy; but if bad, it becomes *rascality* (πανουργία).'

1. 768. ἐξέτεινα χεῖρα, in token of farewell to the deceased. Cp. Aesch. *Choeph.* 8 οὐδ' ἐξέτεινα χεῖρ' ἐπ' ἐκφορᾷ νεκροῦ.

1. 771. ὀργάς, 'angry moods.' So *irae*, as 'temperat iras' Virg. *Aen.* i. 57. Cp. 'the furious winter's rages' in *Cymbeline*. For the mutual affection between Alcestis and her servants see ll. 192, &c.

ἄρα = *nonne*, as in ll. 229, 341.

1. 772. κακοῖς, 'our troubles.' Cp. Aesch. *Agam.* 1580 ὑβρίζειν ἐν κακοῖσιν οὐ σέβω.

1. 773. οὗτος, 'you there!' used in familiar addresses; cp. *Hec.* 1127 οὗτος, τί πάσχεις; Soph. *Oed. Col.* 1627 ὦ οὗτος οὗτος, Οἰδίπους, &c. It thus refers to the 2nd person (Lat. *iste*), as ὅδε does to the 1st, and denotes some one *near*, that is *familiar*; whereas ἐκείνος (*ille*) implies distant respect.

σεμνόν, 'solemn' (as in l. 800), in a reproachful sense. Cp. *Hipp.* 93 τίς δ' οὐ σεμνὸς ἀχθεινὸς βρότων; where it is contrasted (as here l. 775) with εὐπροσήγορος, 'affable.' It denotes a gloomy, reserved, unsocial temper. [Σεμνός is for σεβ-νός, from σέβ-ω, lit. = *reverendus*.]

πεφροντικός, 'thought-absorbed' (Browning). The *perf.* part. implies a settled state of mind. So βλέπειν σεσαρός, ἐγρηγορός, &c.

1. 774. τὸν πρόσπολον, as we say, 'a servant,' the article denoting a class, not an individual. To receive guests with a sullen look was not only wrong from a social point of view, but was regarded as an ill omen. Prof. Paley notes how in Aesch. *Agam.* 503 the statues of the gods are bidden to greet the king on his return with cheerful countenances (φαιδροῖσιν ὄμμασι).

1. 777. συνωφρυωμένῃ. Cp. l. 800, also Hor. *Sat.* ii. 2, 125 'contractae seria frontis.'

1. 778. θυραίου πῆματος. Admetus had told Heracles that he was in mourning for a 'stranger' (ὀθνείος), l. 533.

1. 779. ὅπως ἂν, &c. = 'so shall you become (if you listen to me).' For ὡς ἂν marking an implied *condition* see l. 740 n.

καί is slightly ironical, 'that you may *e'en* become wiser,' implying that a little more wisdom would do him no harm.

1. 780. οἶδας. This Ionic form for οἶσθα is very rare in Attic Greek, but there is no reason to suspect its genuineness. The plurals οἶδαμεν, &c. also occur, but seldom.

1. 781. πόθεν = 'of course not.' Cp. l. 95 n.

1. 782. Cp. l. 419, Soph. *Elect.* 1173 (of death) πᾶσιν γὰρ ἡμῶν τοῦτ' ὀφειλεται παθεῖν. So Phaedrus *Fab.* xxv. 19 'mors vicina flagitabit debitum.'

1. 783. Cp. *Anacreontica* xv. 9—

Τὸ σήμερον μέλει μοι·

τὸ δ' αὔριον τίς οἶδεν;

also Hor. *Od.* iv. 7, 17.

1. 785. τὸ τῆς τύχης, 'the course of fortune;' not a mere periphrasis for τύχη. Cp. τὰ τῆς ἐμπειρίας (Thuc. vii. 49), 'the results of their experience,' and similar phrases.

οἱ προβήσεται, 'whither it will tend,' i.e. 'the issue.' Cp. *Med.* 1117 παραδοκῶ τάκειθεν οἱ προβήσεται.

1. 786. ἀλίσκεται, 'is attained' or 'discovered.' Cp. *Soph. Oed. Tyr.* 110 τὸ ζητούμενον ἀλωτόν, 'is discoverable.'

τέχνη, the soothsayer's art, often ridiculed by Euripides, e.g. in *Elect.* 400 μαντικὴν χαίρειν ἐῷ, and elsewhere.

1. 790. For the double superlatives cp. μέγιστον ἐχθίστη *Med.* 1323, μάλιστα φίλατος *Hippol.* 1421. So 'most Highest,' 'most principal,' &c. in the Bible. In the *Hippolytus*, l. 6, Aphrodite threatens ruin to those who neglect her worship.

1. 792. τὰ ἄλλα, 'these gloomy' or 'ill-timed thoughts;' lit. 'other' than the occasion demands. Cp. *Herc. Fur.* 116 τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἔα.

[1. 795. Some editors adopt the Aldine reading τύχας, rendering ὑπερβαλὼν, 'having surmounted,' and supposing the Servant to have stepped forward at the words δεῦρ' ἐλθέ (l. 779) towards the table, at which Heracles was seated. But πύλας (though an unusual word for the door of a room) has good MSS. authority. The words τάσδ' ὑπερβαλὼν πύλας recur at l. 829.]

1. 797. ξυνεστῶτος, 'sullenness,' = ξύστασις φρενῶν *Hippol.* 983. Cp. Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* iv. 31 'animi contractio.' The metaphor is either from gathering clouds, or from the general idea of solidity, sternness, or rigour of mind.

1. 798. μεθορμιεῖ σε, 'shall change you,' lit. 'unmoor.' Cp. *Med.* 441 μεθορμίσασθαι μόχθων πάρα.

πίτυλος, 'the plash' of the wine in the goblet. So δακρύων πίτυλος *Hippol.* 1464. The derivation is doubtful.

1. 799. Cp. the maxim of Sardanapalus, quoted in the *Anthologia*—  
εὖ εἰδὼς ὅτι θνητὸς ἔφυσ τὸν θυμὸν ἄξει,  
τερπόμενος θαλήσι· θανόντι σοὶ οὔτις ὄνησις.

1. 802. Cp. Mart. *Epigr.* vi. 70 'non est vivere, sed valere, vita;' Seneca *Epist.* 99 'intelligas in longissima vita minimum esse quod vivitur.'

1. 803. πράσσομεν, &c. i.e. 'our present business is not one of mirth,' &c. [But πράσσομεν may = 'we fare,' if οἶα be taken adverbially, like κεδνὰ πράξειν l. 605.]

1. 807. τί ζῶσιν; 'how (say you) they live?' Cp. *Phoen.* 1726, where Oedipus exclaims δεῖν' ἐγὼ τλᾶς, and Antigone answers τί τλᾶς; So in Terence, *Andria* v. 3, Simo replies to his son Pamphilus 'Quid mi pater?'

1. 810. οὐ χρῆν, &c. 'ought I not to be well treated?' i.e. 'ought I to lose good cheer, just because of a stranger's death?'

οὔνεκα, 'for the sake of,' i.e. 'notwithstanding.' Cp. Soph. *Elect.* 787 τῶν τῆσδ' ἀπειλῶν οὔνεχ' ἡμερεύσομεν, 'we will rest at peace for all her threatenings.'

1. 811. οἰκεῖος, 'a home friend.' [There is little doubt as to the right reading, but many read *θυραῖος*, supposing it to be ironical—'very much of a *stranger* she was to be sure!'] The use of οἰκεῖος, 'one of the family,' does not actually let out the secret, though it arouses Heracles' suspicions.

1. 812. Heracles tries to think whether Admetus might have left unmentioned some *greater* calamity.

1. 813. χαίρων ἴθι, lit. 'go with a blessing,' a formula of getting rid of a person. So in *Phoen.* 921 Creon says to Teiresias χαίρων ἴθ', οὐ γὰρ σῶν με δεῖ μαντευμάτων.

1. 816. ἀλλ' ἦ, &c. 'have I really?' or 'can it be that I have been served so ill?' &c.

1. 817. Cp. *Hippol.* 923 οὐ γὰρ ἐν δέοντι λεπτοურγεῖς, πάτερ, = *intempestive*.

δέξασθαι, *ut te exciperent*. For the Greek infinitive see l. 657 n.

1. 819. Heracles interrupts the Servant with the crucial question 'Who is dead?' thus forcing him to tell. He forgot, or perhaps ignored, what Admetus had told him about his parents and children (ll. 515, 517).

[l. 820. τι φροῦδον, the reading of the best MSS. Others have *τις* φροῦδος, which would be correct in spite of the neuter τέκνων. Cp. Soph. *Oed. Tyr.* 1167 Λαῖον *τις* ἦν γεννημάτων.]

1. 821. μὲν οὖν, 'nay rather,' *immo*, correcting the last speaker. Cp. Plato, *Gorgias*, ἐγὼ οὐ φημι; φημὶ μὲν οὖν ἔγωγε, 'I deny it? *nay rather*, I assert it.'

1. 822. ἔπειτα, 'after *that*,' i.e. 'notwithstanding this.' In *Medea* 1398 Jason exclaims *κάπειτ' ἔκτας*; 'didst thou *nevertheless* slay (thy children),' in spite of thy professed love for them?

1. 824. For *σχέτλιε* see l. 470 n.; for *ἡμπλακες* l. 242 n.

1. 827. ἔπειθε (imperf.), 'urged his persuasions.'

1. 829. βία θυμοῦ, *invito animo*. So φρενῶν βία Aesch. *Sept. c. Theb.* 608.

1. 831. κάτα. See note on ἔπειτα l. 822. At these words he tears the garland from his head.

1. 832. ἀλλὰ σοῦ, &c. 'but it was *your* fault,' &c. or the gen. of exclamation, 'to think of your not telling me!' like τῆς ἐμῆς *κάκης*, 'to think of my weakness!' *Med.* 1051 (Paley).

1. 833. [For δώμασιν another reading is δώματος, and for προσκειμένου *προκειμένου* = *παρόντος*. Cp. l. 551 note.]

1. 834. ποῦ καί; 'where?' (with emphasis), or 'but tell me, where.'

See l. 142 n. on the difference made by the position of *καί* in *καί πῶς*, *πῶς καί*, &c.

l. 835. *πάρ' οἶμον* (accus.), 'as you go along the road,' *secundum viam*. The custom of building tombs along the wayside is well known. In *Rhesus* 881 Hector orders the dead to be buried *λεωφόρους πρὸς ἐκτροπάς*, 'at the turning-off from the public road.' The wayside tomb of one Brasilas is mentioned by Theocritus, *Idyll.* vii. 11, imitated by Virgil, *Ecl.* ix. 60. Burial within the city walls was forbidden from early times both in Greece and at Rome. One of the Laws of the XII Tables was *Hominem mortuum in urbe ne sepelito neve urito*.

l. 836. *ἐκ* = *ἐξ*ω, 'outside of.'

The Servant having left the stage, Heracles utters the following soliloquy, ll. 837-860.

l. 837. *καρδία*, &c. So Odysseus (*Hom. Od.* xx. 18) summons up courage, addressing his *φίλον ἦτορ* thus, *τέτλαθι δῆ, κραδίη, καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο ποτ' ἔτλης*.

l. 839. For the pedigree of Heracles see l. 509 n. Alcmena is called *Τιρυνθία* because of her marriage with Amphitryon, king of Tiryns.

l. 843. Here, as elsewhere, Thanatos is identified with Hades as 'king of the dead.' Cp. l. 1140. In l. 25 he is simply the 'sacrificer.'

l. 844. *φυλάξω*, 'watch for,' as in *Hom. Od.* iv. 670 *αὐτὸν ἰόντα λοχῆσομαι ἥδ' ἐφυλάξω*. Cp. *φρουρῶν τόδ' ἦμαρ* l. 27.

l. 845. *προσφαγμάτων*, gen. after *πίνοντα*, 'drinking of the offerings.' These are probably blood-offerings (l. 851) preceding the customary ones of milk, honey, and wine (*Aesch. Persae* 616, &c.). But in *Hom. Od.* xi. 25, &c. the sacrifice of a victim seems to follow these other offerings (*τὰ δὲ μῆλα λαβὼν ἀπεδειροτόμησα*, &c.).

l. 849. *πρίν*, for *πρὶν ἄν*, with subj., as *πρὶν μάθης* *Soph. Philoct.* 917. The *ἄν* is often omitted by the poets, sometimes also in prose, as *Thuc.* viii. 9 *πρίν τι καὶ ἰσχυρὸν λάβωσι*. *Πρὶν* (*ἄν*) with subj. always follows a negative clause or its equivalent, as *οὐ ποιήσω πρὶν* (*ἄν*) *ἔλθης*.

l. 850. *ἦν δ' οὖν*, &c. 'but if I should miss.' *Οὖν* = 'really' (l. 73 n.), is best rendered by an emphasis on the verb.

l. 851. *αἵματηρόν πέλανον*, 'clotted blood.' See l. 845 n. Cp. *πέλανος αἵματοσταγῆς* *Aesch. Persae* 812. In the *Choephori* 89 *πέλανος* is a liquid. Pausanias says that Cecrops, thinking it wrong to sacrifice animals, substituted cakes, called *πέλανοι*.

*τῶν κάτω*, after *δόμους*, with *Κόρης*, &c. in apposition.

l. 852. For *Κόρη* as a title of Persephone see l. 358 n. *ἀνηλίους*. Cp. l. 437 n.

l. 857. *αἰδεσθεῖς*. For the meaning of *αἰδώς* cp. l. 601 n.

l. 859. *κακόν* here = *ἀγνώμονα*, 'ungrateful.'

11. 861-934. Heracles sallies forth in quest of Thanatos at the tomb. Admetus, returning from the funeral, stops at the palace-doors, which he dares not enter, and vents his grief in lyric verse, the Chorus responding. This kind of lament, sung by an actor and the Chorus alternately, was called a *Commos* (κομμός). How Heracles managed to avoid meeting Admetus on his way from the tomb does not appear. This may be an oversight on the part of Euripides.

1. 865. πῶς ἄν here = *utinaam*. The same expression occurs in *Med.* 97.

1. 867. κείνων ἔραμαι, 'I long for their state,' i. e. of the dead. Cp. ἐκεῖ 1. 744. Perhaps Aristophanes parodied this in the *Vespaë* 751, where the law-loving Philocleon says, κείνων ἔραμαι, κείθι γενοίμαν, ἵν' ὁ κῆρυξ φησί· 'τίς ἀψήφιστος; ἀνιστάσθω.'

1. 869. πόδα, often added after verbs of motion, as ἐκβὰς πόδα *Heracl.* 802. Cp. προβὰς κῶλον δεξιόν *Phoen.* 1412.

1. 870. ὄμηρον, a 'hostage' for his life, because she died for him.

1. 874. δι' ὀδύνας ἔβας, also in *Elect.* 1210. Cp. *Hippol.* 1164 δι' ἔχθρας ἀφιγμένους, *Xen. Anab.* iii. 2, 8 διὰ φιλίας λέναι.

1. 875. οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖς. A story is told of Solon lamenting his son's death, that when one said ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἀνύττεις, he replied δι' αὐτὸ τοῦτο δακρύω, ὅτι οὐδὲν ἀνύττω.

1. 877. The antistrophic line 894 shows that a syllable is wanting here. [Paley proposes to read *κάταντα*.]

1. 878. ἤλκωσεν. Cp. *Suppl.* 222 ἤλκωσας οἴκους. The metaphor is from a festering wound (ἔλκος).

1. 879. Perhaps ἦ is to be supplied before ἀμαρτεῖν, or ἀμαρτεῖν = τοῦ ἀμαρτεῖν, but this latter construction is rare. It may be better to take it thus—'What loss (τί ἀμαρτεῖν) is a worse evil than (the loss of) a faithful wife?' condensed for τοῦ ἀμαρτεῖν πιστῆς ἀλόχου.

1. 880. μὴ ὦφελον οἰκεῖν, = ὦφελον μὴ οἰκεῖν, since ὦφελον literally means 'I ought,' i. e. 'would that I,' &c. Cp. *Soph. Philoct.* 969 μὴ ποτ' ὦφελον λιπεῖν.

11. 882, &c. Cp. 11. 238, &c. and the passage from *Medea* quoted in the note there, beginning καὶ φημι βροτῶν οἵτινές εἰσιν πάμπαν ἄπειροι, &c.

1. 883. There is a similar passage in *Hippol.* 258 τὸ δ' ὑπὲρ δισσων μίαν ὠδίνειν ψυχὴν χαλεπὸν βαρὺς ὡς καὶ γὰρ τῇσδ' ὑπεραλγῶ, i. e. it is enough for each soul to bear its own bitterness, without having to bear another's also.

τῆς = ἐκείνης. See on 1. 264.

1. 886. Cp. *Hom. Il.* x. 63 θαλάμους κεραῖζομένους. [The derivation from κέρας, as if referring to the attack of horned animals, is doubtful. It is more probably from κερ, the stem of κείρειν, 'to shear' or 'cut,' i. e. 'to ravage,' like τέμνειν γῆν.]



1. 890. *πέρas*, &c. said, in reference to Admetus' incessant exclamations of woe. *ἀλγέων*, a disyllable. See l. 873 in the strophe.

1. 892. See on l. 417, &c.

1. 893. Cp. *Orest.* 979 ἕτερα δ' ἕτερος ἀμείβεται πῆματα.

1. 896. ὑπὸ γαῖαν (accus. of motion), 'who have gone below.' Cp. l. 238 n.

1. 897. *ρίψαι*, 'throw myself,' as in *Cyclops* 166 *ρίψει τ' ἐς ἄλμην λευκάδος πέτρας ἄπο*. Many active verbs are thus used intransitively, as *κρύπτειν*, *πάλλειν*, *ἐγείρειν*, *βάλλειν*, *τρέπειν*, *φέρειν*, &c. With *ρίπτειν* cp. Milton, *L'Allegro* 113, 'out of doors he flings.'

1. 901. *σὺν ἂν ἔσχεν*, another instance of *tnesis*; cp. ll. 548, 579 n. Here it is less observable, because *σὺν* has the adverbial force of *simul*, instead of forming the compound *συνέχειν* = *cohibere*.

1. 902. *διαβάντε*, masc., though in apposition with *ψυχάς*, which is in sense masculine, or at least common. Cp. Hom. *Il.* viii. 455, where two goddesses are said to be *πληγέντε κεραύνῃ*. In Soph. *Oed. Col.* 1676 Antigone speaks of herself and sister as *ιδόντε καὶ παθούσα*. There was probably only one *original* form for the dual in adjectives. In the article especially *τῷ* and *τοῖν* are used with feminine nouns, as *τῷ γυναιῖκε*, &c.

1. 903. *ἐν γένει*, 'a relative.' Cp. Soph. *Oed. Tyr.* 1016 *ἦν σοι Πόλυβος οὐδὲν ἐν γένει*. Some suppose an allusion to Pericles, but he had two sons, who died nearly at the same time; others to Anaxagoras, who is said to have exclaimed, on hearing of his son's death, 'I knew I had begotten a mortal child.' But the case is very likely an imaginary one.

1. 907. *ἄλις*, 'moderately,' lit. 'enough and no more.' Cp. *Med.* 629 *εἰ δ' ἄλις ἔλθοι Κύπρις, οὐκ ἄλλᾳ θεὸς εὐχαρις οὕτω*.

1. 910. *βίτου πόρσω* = *longe provectus aetate*. So *πόρρω τοῦ βίου* Plato, *Apol. Socr.* ch. 29, *πρόσω ἀρετῆς* Hdt. vii. 237. These are genitives of respect. See on *ἦκον βίου* l. 291.

1. 911. *σχῆμα δόμων*, not a mere periphrasis for *δόμοι*, but giving a picture of the old familiar form of the house, as it strikes his eye. Cp. *σχῆματ' οἰκῶν* *Hec.* 619, *Ἀσιάτιδος γῆς σχῆμα* *Androm.* I.

1. 912. *μεταπίπτοντος*, 'changing,' perhaps a metaphor from the fall of the dice. Cp. *Ion* 412 *μεταπέσοι βελτίονα*, 'may there be a change for the better.'

1. 914. *τὸ μέσον*, 'the difference.' So in Hdt. i. 126 the Persians, comparing a day of toil with one of festivity, say *πολλὸν εἶναι τὸ μέσον*.

1. 915. *πεύκαις*, i. e. nuptial torches (*taedae*). Mount Pelion, which overlooked Iolcos the home of Alcestis (l. 249), was famed for its pine-groves. The 'Pelian pine' is mentioned in *Medea* 3, 4, as furnishing materials for the ship Argo.



l. 920. ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρων, 'by parents on both sides.' Admetus' parents were Pheres and Clymene, those of Alcestis were Pelias and Anaxibia.

l. 921. εἶμεν, a less common, but a genuine Attic form of εἴημεν. Plato also has εἶτην and εἶτε. ἀριστέων, a trisyllable. Cp. l. 890.

l. 922. Cp. *Med.* 1176 ἀντίμολπον ὀλολυγῆς κῶκυτον, 'a cry of wailing instead of a cry of joy.' Ἀντίπαλοι must be repeated with στολμοί before πέπλων in the next line.

l. 925. λέκτρων κοίτας, for λέκτρα, a common pleonasm (not quite like σχῆμα δόμων l. 911). So θρήνων ὀδυρμοί, πέπλων φάρος, &c. Cp. μελάθρων στέγαι l. 248.

l. 926. παρά implies contrast with former prosperity, making the present loss more bitter. With the accus. after ἦλθεν it means 'following close upon.' Paley quotes *Heracl.* 611 παρὰ δ' ἄλλαν ἄλλα μοῖρα διώκει. [Similarly *secundum*, as in Livy xxi. 45 '*secundum* precationem caput pecudis saxo elisit,' i.e. 'directly after the prayer.'] For the sense cp. *Hel.* 418, *Troad.* 634.

ἀπειροκάκῳ. Cp. Thuc. v. 105 μακαρίσαντες ὑμῶν τὸ ἀπειρόκακον οὐ ζηλοῦμεν τὸ ἄφρον.

l. 934. δάμαρτος with παρέλυσεν, 'has parted from a wife.' [If παρέλυσεν contains a metaphor from unyoking one ox of a pair (Paley), we are reminded of Virgil's description of the plague-stricken ox in *Georg.* iii. 517 'It tristis arator, maerentem abjungens fraterna morte juvencum.' The old reading was πολλοῖς in l. 932, i.e. 'the death of a wife has loosed the bond of love (φιλίαν supplied) to many.']

ll. 935-961. ADMETUS. 'Surely her lot is more blest than mine; for she is freed from pain and sorrow. But how shall I bear the desolation within these walls and the maiden throngs without? My enemies too will point at me and say—"See the man who dared not die!" Better far is death than such a life.'

l. 935. δαίμονα, 'fate.' Cp. *Ion* 1269 ἐσθλοῦ δ' ἔκυρσα δαίμονος.

l. 936. ὅμως, 'still (it is so).' Ὅμως is often attached to a participle, though it belongs to the principal clause. Cp. *Med.* 282 ἐρήσομαι δέ, καὶ κακῶς πάσχουσ' ὅμως.

l. 937. For the sentiment cp. Soph. *Oed. Col.* 955 θανόντων δ' οὐδὲν ἄλγος ἄπτεται.

l. 938. εὐκλεής, 'glorified,' in contrast with his own inglorious state (l. 961).

l. 939. οὐ χρῆν (imperf.), 'ought not to be alive' (l. 955 n.). Cp. l. 379. Admetus almost repeats his father's words, now feeling the force of them, παρελθὼν τὴν πεπρωμένην τύχην (l. 695).

l. 940. ἄρτι μανθάνω, 'now (at last) I know it.' The foreboding of the maidservant, l. 146, is realised, for the blow *has* come. See note there, also on l. 382.

l. 942. For the double *ἄν* see l. 72 n.

l. 944. *ἔξελαῖ*, the Attic contracted future (*ἐλάσω*, -άω, -ᾶ). Cp. *ἐλῶσι*

l. 951. Only a few verbs in -άω, -έω have this future; mostly those in -άννυμι, and several in -άζω, as *βιβάζω*, &c.

l. 948. οἱ, i.e. the servants, as shown by *δέσποτιν* following.

l. 951. *γάμνι*, 'nuptials' or 'nuptial-feasts,' a common meaning of *γάμος* in the plural.

*ἐλῶσι* (see l. 944 n.), 'will drive me away,' or perhaps 'drive me distracted,' Lat. *agitare*.

l. 952. So *γυναικοπληθὺς ὄμιλος*, Aesch. *Pers.* 127.

l. 955. *τὸν αἰσχροῦς ζῶντα*, 'who to his shame yet lives,' = *ὃν οὐ χρεὶν ζῆν* l. 939. *Ζῆν* is simply 'to be alive;' the manner or course of life is expressed by *βιοτεύειν*.

l. 957. *δοκεῖ*, 'wishes to be thought' or 'pretends to be.' Cp. Aristoph. *Equit.* 392 *κατ' ἀνὴρ ἔδοξεν εἶναι*. For *εἶτα* see ll. 822, 831 n.

l. 959. *πρὸς κακοῖσι*. Cp. l. 557.

l. 960. *κύδιον*, often = *κρείσσον* simply, but is here 'more glorious,' by contrast with *αἰσχροῦς*, *κακῶς*, &c.

ll. 962-1005. CHORUS. '*Nothing is stronger than Necessity; neither drug nor magic spell. She heeds not prayer or sacrifice, and nought may soften her relentless breast. Even Zeus worketh his will by her aid. Thou, Admetus, art in her grasp; for thou canst not restore thy lost one—dear in death as in life. Yet mourn her not as dead, but worship her, for she is a spirit blest.*'

l. 962. A Chorus in the *Medea*, l. 1081, opens in a similar way—*πολλάκις ἤδε διὰ λεπτοτέρων μύθων ἔμολον*, &c. Here the poet is doubtless alluding to his own knowledge of natural science, acquired chiefly from Anaxagoras. The mention however of Orphic doctrines derived from the neighbouring Thrace (l. 967) is suited to the character of his *Pheraean* chorus.

*μούσας* = literature generally, but especially verse, as distinguished from *λόγων*, the maxims of philosophers and the arguments of sophists.

l. 963. *μετάρσιος*, 'soaring aloft' in the highest regions of philosophy and literature; but there is a special reference to Euripides' favourite study of astronomy. Devotion to the study of *μετέωρα* was a special (though utterly unfounded) charge against Socrates, and is made much of by Aristophanes in the *Clouds*.

l. 965. *ἀνάγκας*, &c. Cp. *Hel.* 514 *δείνης ἀνάγκης οὐδ' ἰσχύειν πλεόν*, and the passage in Horace, *Od.* i. 35, 17 beginning 'Te semper anteit saeva Necessitas.' In reply to the question 'What is strongest?' Thales is said to have answered *ἰσχυρότατον Ἀνάγκη, κρατεῖ γὰρ πάντων*.

l. 967. The so-called 'Orphic' mysteries were rites (*τελεταί*) of

purification, but Orpheus was also credited with medical lore, possibly from being confounded with Musaeus his alleged disciple. Aristophanes distinguishes between them, *Ranae* 1032. The *σανίδες* are tablets containing prescriptions; these were kept in a temple of Dionysus on Mount Haemus in Thrace.

1. 967. τὰς=ās. This ancient use of ὁ, ἡ, τό occurs even in an iambic line, Aesch. *Agam.* 507 Διὸς μακέλλῃ, τῇ κατείργασται πέδον. Only once do we find it in the nominative, ἔρως ὁ κατ' ὀμμάτων στάζεις πόθον, *Hippol.* 52; and there the reading is doubtful.

1. 968. Ὀρφεῖα γῆρυς='the melodious Orpheus,' like Καδμείαν μέριμναν *Phoen.* 1064, Πιπθέως γῆρας *Hippol.* 794. Cp. Homer's βίη Ἡρακλεΐῃ, and 'vis Geryonai,' 'Herculeus labor,' &c. in Latin.

1. 970. For Aesculapius, the son of Phoebus, see 1. 4 n. Here the Greek 'medical schools' are alluded to, whose members claimed descent from him. Of these Hippocrates of Cos was the most famous.

1. 972. ἀντιτεμών refers to the shredding of herbs as antidotes for diseases. Cp. Pindar, *Pylh.* iv. 393 ἀντίτομα στερεῶν ὀδυνῶν, Aesch. *Agam.* 17 ἀντίμολπον ἐντέμνων ἄκος.

1. 973. μόνas, i.e. Hades (or Thanatos) excepted. Cp. 1. 424 n.

1. 976. μείζων, 'with greater force.' Cp. *Med.* 627 ἔρωτες ἄγαν ἐλθόντες, the opposite of εἰ δ' ἄλῃς ἔλθοι (quoted on 1. 907).

1. 978. ὃ τι νεύσῃ. For the omission of ἄν see note on ὅτου ἀγνίσῃ, 1. 76. The will of Zeus was represented by his 'nod' (hence the word *numen*). Cp. Hom. *Il.* i. 526 οὐδ' ἀτελεύτητον, ὃ τι κεν κεφαλῇ κατανεύσω.

1. 979. σὺν σοί, because even Zeus 'cannot evade his destiny' (Aesch. *Prom.* 526), and is therefore powerless without the aid of Necessity.

1. 980. δαμάξεις, 'you subdue,' i.e. 'soften' or 'melt,' or perhaps 'reduce' the iron from the ore (as Paley explains it). The Chalybes were iron-workers of Pontus in Asia Minor, mentioned by Herodotus i. 28, and by Xenophon, *Anab.* v. 5. The usual form of the name is Χάλυβες, from Χάλυψ, but the nom. sing. Χάλυβος occurs in Aesch. *Sept. c. Thebas* 725.

1. 981. ἀποτόμου, 'harsh,' 'relentless.' Cp. 1. 118 n. So 'animo praeruptus' Tac. *Ann.* xvi. 17.

αἰδώς, 'compunction,' from the idea of 'respect,' as explained on 1. 601.

1. 982. καὶ σέ, 'thee too,' addressing Admetus.

1. 989. σκότιοι φθίνουσι, 'perish darkling,' i.e. in the darkness of death. [Others make σκότιοι=νόθοι, as in Hom. *Il.* vi. 24 σκότιον δέ ἐ γείνατο μήτηρ, in allusion to the secret amours of the gods with mortal women, whence *heroes* sprung.]

1. 995. φθιμένων νεκύων, a common pleonasm, from Homer's νεκύων κατατεθνηώτων, νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισι, &c.

11. 996, &c. I.e. 'let not her tomb be a mere mound of earth, but a shrine to worship at.'

θεοῖσιν ὁμοίως, a shortened form of comparison for θεῶν ναοῖς ὁμοίως. Cp. Hom. *Il.* xvii. 51 κομαὶ Χαρτέσσιν ὁμοίαι, 'hair like (that of) the Graces.'

1. 1000. δοχμίαν, 'winding,' to get up the hill (ὄρθην οἶμον 1. 885). Cp. l. 575 n.

1. 1004. εὖ δὲ δοίης. The δαίμονες, or spirits of the dead, were believed to have the power of conferring blessings on men. Hence in Aesch. *Persae* 224 the spirit of Darius is invoked ἐσθλὰ πέμπειν γῆς ἔνερθεν εἰς φάος.

1. 1006. καὶ μῆν. Cp. l. 507 n.

Enter HERACLES, supporting a woman with her face veiled. LL. 1008-1158. HERACLES. 'I would speak, Admetus, as a friend to a friend, Why didst thou conceal thy loss, and feast me in thy house of mourning? For this I cannot but blame thee. But to my errand. Take this woman, whom I have just won as a prize in a great contest, and keep her for me against my return.' ADMETUS. 'It cannot be; this would add sorrow to sorrow. How can I keep her here free from harm? I fear the report of men. Surely she is like Alcestis! Take her away; the sight troubles my soul.' HER. 'Would that I could restore thy wife! Cease thy vain grieving; time will do much.' ADM. 'Ay, if time and death be one; but now—' HER. 'Wilt thou not wed again? A new spouse might cheer thee.' ADM. 'Perish the thought! 'twere an insult to the dead.' HER. 'Receive now this woman.' ADM. 'Urge me not, I pray.' HER. 'I have good reasons; trust me. (Admetus consents.) Nay, to thy hands alone I commit her. Hold her fast; look now upon her!' ADM. 'Alcestis?' HER. 'Tis even she; thou hast thy wife again.' ADM. 'The blessing of Zeus be upon thee! But why stands she mute?' HER. 'The spell of death is on her, and three days must pass. But I go to my task.' ADM. 'Stay here on thy return, and fare thee well. Keep we now high festival, since blest is my lot indeed!'

1. 1009. μομφάς, 'ground of complaint.' Cp. l. 1017.

ὑπὸ σπλάγχνοις ἔχειν, 'to hide within one's breast,' i.e. say nothing about them.

1. 1010. ἡξίουσιν, 'claimed the right,' 'expected.'

1. 1011. ἐξετάζεσθαι, 'to be treated;' lit. 'to be proved after examination (ἐξέτασις).' So Demosthenes, *de Corona*, speaks of himself as ἐξεταζόμενος, 'tried and proved' in his policy. Cp. the Latin 'spectatus amicus.'

1. 1014. ὥς δῆ, 'as if forsooth.' The δῆ, emphasising ὥς, gives the notion of pretence.

1. 1015. ἐλευψάμην, usually active; but cp. χῶδς χέασθαι Aesch. *Persae* 221.

1. 1021. ἱππους Θρηκίας. See ll. 68, 483.

1. 1023. τύχοιμι, νοστήσaiμι, both real optatives, 'what *I trust* I may not meet with, for *I hope* I may return.' Τυχεῖν takes the accus. as well as the gen.; cp. Aesch. *Choeph.* 698 τυχεῖν τὰ πρόσφορα, Soph. *Antig.* 1168 τοῦτο τυχεῖν.

1. 1024. προσπολεῖν δόμοις, 'to serve your house' as a handmaiden (πρόσπολος), not 'in your house.' Cp. *Troad.* 264 τύμβῳ προσπολεῖν Ἀχιλλέως.

[1. 1027. Another reading of good authority is ἄξιον πόνου.]

1. 1028. νικητήρια. A plural noun is often put poetically in apposition with a noun singular. Cp. σημεῖα l. 717, *Hec.* 265 Ἑλένην τάφῳ προσφάγματα, *Orest.* 1053 μνήμα ἔν, κέδρου τεχνάσματα, Hom. *Il.* xxi. 268 χρυσοῦς δῶρα θεοῖο. So 'clipeum Volcani dona,' Virg. *Aen.* viii. 729.

1. 1029. τὰ κοῦφα, after νικῶσιν, combines the ideas of 'smaller contests' (opp. τὰ μείζονα) and of 'feats of agility,' such as foot-racing. The woman was part of the larger prize for boxing and wrestling. [In Homer, *Il.* xxiii. 262, &c. the first prize is a woman and a tripod, the second a mare in foal, and the third a caldron.]

1. 1033. παρῆναι (παρίημι), 'to let slip,' *praetermittere*.

ἦν, with αἰσχρόν, 'it were a shame,' = 'it would have been.' The imperf. without ἂν is often conditional, when the general sense shows that the thing did not actually occur. So καλῶς εἶχε, ἐβουλόμην, &c., and in Latin *poteram*, *oportebat*, &c. for *possem*, &c.

1. 1037. ἐν ἐχθροῖσιν τιθεῖς, 'counting you as an enemy;' lit. 'placing you among' or 'in the class of enemies.' Cp. Plato, *Rep.* v. ch. 19 ὥς γ' ἐν φιλοσόφοις τιθέναι. This is in answer to Heracles' remonstrance, l. 1011.

1. 1039. Cp. l. 557 καὶ πρὸς κακοῖσιν, &c.

1. 1042. ἔστιν, emphatic (as the accent shows), 'it is possible.'

1. 1045. μὴ μ' ἀναμνήσης. This is the reading of some MSS. of fair repute, but some editions have μιμνήσκης (corrected from μιμνήσκεῖς) with a comma after Φεραίῳν. The latter would mean '(I fear) lest you should remind me of my misfortunes,' not 'do not remind me,' which would require the *aorist* subj., as in the text.

1. 1049. ποῦ καί, 'where too' or 'besides, where.' Cp. ll. 482, 834 n, also l. 1056.

1. 1050. πρέπει, 'she clearly shows,' not impersonal. Cp. l. 512 n.

1. 1051. ἀνδρῶν after στέγην which is governed by κατὰ. [Some take κατ' ἀνδρῶν = 'among the men,' and make στέγην the acc. after ἐνοικήσει, but this would seem to require μετά.] For the 'men's apartments' (ἀνδρῶνες) see l. 546 n.

l. 1052. στρωφωμένη, 'moving freely,' Lat. *versari*.

l. 1054. σοῦ, emphatic, 'for *your* credit' as well as my own; because Heracles had brought her there.

l. 1055. ἐσβήσας. Cp. *Bacchae* 466 Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς εἰσέβησε. This transitive aor. is not common in Attic Greek, but βῆσε is frequent in Homer.

l. 1056. καὶ πῶς = 'pray, how.' See references given on l. 1049 n.

ἐπεσφρῶ, subj. 'am I to introduce her?' Cp. *Elect.* 1032 λέκτροις ἐπέισφρησε. Εἰσφρεῖν is a distinctive Attic word = εἰσάγειν. So διαφρεῖν Thuc. vii. 32. The simple verb is not used.

l. 1058. ἐλέγξῃ, 'should reproach me,' followed by πίτνειν. The sense of 'accusation' comes from that of 'questioning' suspected criminals. Cp. l. 15 n.

l. 1059. For ἄλλης some read ἄλλοις. The adj. is often thus transposed; cp. *Orest.* 988 ποτανὸν δῶγμα πάλων = 'pursuit of winged steeds,' lit. 'winged steed-pursuit.' See l. 103 n.

l. 1060. τῆς θανούσης. This should strictly be καὶ ἐκ τῆς θανούσης to correspond with ἐκ τε δημότων l. 1057. But the word μέμψιν would not properly apply to Alcestis, who was dead.

l. 1062. ἔχουσα. For the participle with ἴσθι see ll. 150, 438 n.; and for ταῦτά with dative, 'the same as,' l. 736 n.

l. 1063. προσήϊξαι, a perf. mid. form from the stem of εἶκω, found also in the Homeric pluperf. ἔϊκτο or ἤϊκτο, and in the active ἔϊκτον for εἰόικατον. Cp. Hom. *Od.* iv. 796 δέμας δ' ἤϊκτο γυναικί.

l. 1065. μή μ' ἔλῃς ἥρημένον, a sort of proverb, 'do not slay the slain,' meaning much the same as τὸν θανόντ' ἐπικτανεῖν Soph. *Antig.* 1030.

l. 1067. θολοῖ, 'troubles,' *turbat*. So θολερός, *turbidus*, is often used of grief and misfortune. Θόλος is the black fluid emitted by the cuttle-fish, which discolours the water.

l. 1069. ἄρτι γεύομαι. Cp. l. 940 n.

l. 1071. ὅστις εἴσι, *quisquis veniet*, 'whatever god shall visit us.' [Εἴσι is Hermann's correction for εἰ σύ, which some editors retain, i.e. 'in whatever state thou art,' *qualiscunque es*, in reference to τύχην.]

καρτερεῖν δόσιν. Cp. *Androm.* 262 ἐγκαρτερεῖς δὴ θάνατον.

l. 1072. εἰ γάρ = 'would that I,' &c. Cp. l. 91 n. Εἰ or εἴθε with imperf. = 'I wish it were so *now*;' with aor. 'I wish it had been' (l. 1102); with opt. 'I wish it might be *hereafter*,' as εἰ φανεῖς l. 91.

l. 1075. ποῦ τόδε; 'to what purpose is this?' i.e. what is the good of saying this? Lat. *quorsum haec?*

l. 1076. οὐκ ἔστι. Cp. l. 1042 n.

l. 1077. μή νυν ὑπέρβαλλε, 'do not then (*igitur*) give way to excess

(of grief'). [Another reading, of good authority, is *ὑπέρβαινε*, which means much the same, and goes well with *ἐναισίμως*, since *ὑπερβαίνειν* is especially used of transgressing *laws*. See next note.]

*ἐναισίμως*, 'moderately,' lit. 'with due regard to the decrees of fate (*αἶσα*).' Cp. the Homeric *κατ' αἶσαν* = 'duly,' 'rightly.'

1. 1078. A sentiment as common as it is true. Cp. Aesch. *Prom.* 271 *ἐλαφρὸν ὅστις πημάτων ἔξω πόδα ἔχει παραινείν*, &c., and Ter. *Andria* ii. 1 'facile omnes, quum valemus, recta consilia aegrotis damus.'

1. 1079. *τί ἂν προκόπτοις*, 'what progress do you expect to make?' Cp. *Hippol.* 23 *πάσαι προκόψασα*. So in St. Luke ii. 52 *προέκοπτε σοφία*. The metaphor is probably taken from pioneers clearing the road in front of an army.

*εἰ θέλεις* (indic.), 'if (as a fact) you wish,' i.e. 'since you wish,' or 'it being your pleasure.' Cp. ll. 200, 327 n. [Some read *θέλοις*.]

1. 1080. *ἔρως* probably means 'desire of grief,' in reference to the natural relief one finds in giving vent to sorrow. Cp. *Suppl.* 79 *ἄπληστος ἄδε μ' ἐξάγει χάρις γόων*. So in Hom. *Od.* iv. 102 Menelaus says *γόφ φρένα τέρομαι*, and Lucan, *Pharsalia* ix. 111, says of Cornelia mourning for her husband 'perfruitur lacrimis, et *amat* pro conjuge *luctum*.' Cp. also Constance's reply to Philip, in Shakspeare *King John* iii. 4 'Then have I reason to be fond of grief.' Heracles (l. 1081) understands Admetus to mean his love for Alcestis.

*ἐξάγει*, 'carries me away,' said of strong excitement.

1. 1082. *ἀπώλεσεν*, sc. *Ἀλκηστis*, or perhaps *τὸ φιλῆσαι*, which comes to the same thing. See on *ἀπώλεσας*, l. 179.

1. 1084. *ὥστε*, &c. refers to preceding line, = 'my loss is such that,' &c. *Ἄνδρα τόνδε* = *ἐμέ*, as in ll. 331, 690.

1. 1085. *χρόνος μαλάξει*. The very words of Alcestis when dying, l. 381.

*ἡβάσκει*, 'is in its prime,' lit. 'is reaching maturity,' properly said of youths coming to manhood (*ἡβη*).

1. 1086. *εἰ χρόνος*, &c. 'if *time* means my death-time,' i.e. 'death alone can end my grief.'

1. 1090. *τῷδε*. Cp. l. 1084 n.

1. 1092. *ὅπου ἐστὶ* refers not so much to her *place* (i.e. whether here or in Hades) as to her state in the other world, and especially to the question whether she could know what was passing on earth. So Alcmena in *Heracl.* 946 speaks of her dead son as *τὸν ὄνθ' ὅπου ὀστί*.

1. 1093. See *ὀφλισκάνω* in Lexicon, and cp. *γέλωτα ὀφλεῖν Med.* 403, *ἀμαθίαν ὀφλήσομεν Hec.* 327. The full phrase 'to owe the penalty (*δίκην*) for a crime' was shortened into 'owe the crime' itself.

1. 1094. *ὥς*, &c. sc. *αἶνει με* from previous line; '(praise me, but) on



condition that,' &c. Or perhaps supply ἴσθι, 'be sure that,' &c. Καλῶν is the Attic future from καλέ(σ)ων. See on ἐξελαῖ l. 944.

l. 1095. ἐπῆνεσα = 'you have my praise.' The aorist marks the simple action of the verb, without reference to time past or present. In English this idea is expressed by the present tense. So in *Med.* 708 οὐδ' ἐπῆνεσα = 'I do not approve,' *ib.* 791 ὤμωξα, 'I mourn for,' in *Aristoph. Equit.* 695 ἤσθην ἀπείλας, ἐγέλασα = 'I like your threats, I laugh at them.'

l. 1098. μή, i. e. 'don't force me.' For πρὸς σε, &c. cp. l. 275 n.

σπείραντος. Cp. the Latin '*satus Anchisa*,' &c.

l. 1099. καὶ μὴν, 'and yet;' see on l. 653.

l. 1101. ἐς δέον, 'opportunistically.' Cp. ἐν δέοντι l. 817.

l. 1102. εἶθε ἔλαβες. See l. 1072 n.

l. 1103. He means that his host will also gain a prize in getting back his wife; but Admetus understands it of sharing the joy of victory with his friend.

l. 1104. καλῶς ἔλεξας = 'thank you;' a polite form of assent. Lat. *benigne (dicis)*.

l. 1106. χρή, &c. = 'she really must go, at least if you will not be angry' at my insisting upon it. Here Admetus first shows signs of yielding; this prepares us for his next words *νίκα νυν*, &c.

l. 1109. ἐσθ' ὅτε, 'some day,' *aliquando*. So ἐσθ' ὅπου, ἐσθ' ὅπως, &c.

l. 1110. κομίζετε, said to the attendants.

[l. 1111. For μεθείην some read μεθείμην. But the construction of μεθέσθαι with an accus. is at least doubtful, and the reading in the text has good authority.]

l. 1118. καὶ δῆ, &c. 'well, I do stretch it forth, as to the severed Gorgon's head;' i. e. with averted eyes, because the Gorgon's head turned the beholder to stone. For the story of Medusa see *Hesiod, Theog.* 280. The elision of the ι in the dative Γόργονι is rare, but there is an instance of it in *Soph. Oed. Col.* 1436 θανόντ', ἐπεὶ οὐ μοι ζῶντί γ' αὖθις ἔξετον.

l. 1121. βλέπον, &c. Here he removes the veil from the face of Alcestis.

πρέπειν, 'to resemble,' as in *Bacch.* 915 πρέπεις δὲ Κάδμου θυγατέρων μορφῇ μιᾷ. Lit. 'to strike' one as being like; see on l. 512. With what follows compare the last scene of the *Winter's Tale*.

[l. 1123. For λέξω some good MSS. have λεύσω. This may be an error caused by λεύσω in the next line, or it may be the right word altered to λέξω to avoid repetition.]

l. 1125. κέρτομος, 'delusive,' perhaps = 'heart-cutting,' i. e. 'taunting.' Cp. *Soph. Philoct.* 1235 πότερα κερτομῶν λέγεις τάδε, i. e. 'in mockery.' [Though κέρτομος is said to be from κέαρ and τέμνειν, it is probably a deri-



## ALCESTIS.

vative from the root κερ in κείρ-ειν, 'to shear' with added τ (t) as in *cur-t-us*, &c., and in Sanscrit *kart* = 'cut.' Cp. l. 886 n., *Hel.* 619.]

θεοῦ, 'from heaven,' = θεοῦ τινος χάρα. Θεοῦ is a monosyllable.

l. 1127. ὄρα μὴ ᾗ, 'beware lest it be;' ὄρα μὴ ἔστιν would mean 'see whether it be not,'—an enquiry.

l. 1128. οὐ ψυχαγωγόν, &c. 'he whom you made your guest is *no* necromancer,' or 'raiser of spirits.' Cp. l. 489 n. In Thessaly there were professed 'spiritualists,' and Euripides may have had in his mind similar impostors at Athens. The Chorus in the *Persae* invokes the infernal powers to send up the ghost of Darius; and in Herodotus v. 92 Periander sends to a νεκρομαντεῖον in Epirus to raise the spirit of his wife Melissa.

l. 1130. ἀπιστεῖν τύχῃ, 'mistrust fortune.' [The MSS. reading τύχην would mean 'disbelieve (the fact of) thy good fortune.']

l. 1131. θίγω, &c. 'may I touch?' *licetne tangere?*

l. 1135. φθόνος, &c., in allusion to the wide-spread belief, that any great prosperity excited the jealousy of the gods and caused a man's downfall. Thus in *Orestes* 964 Electra says of the once glorious house of Pelops, φθόνος νιν εἶλε θεόθεν. The story of Polycrates (*Hdt.* iii. 40) is well known, to whom his friend Amasis wrote, saying—'Thy great successes please me not, knowing how jealous the gods are.' So in Livy v. 21 Camillus prays that some light mishap may befall him in the hour of victory, to avert the *invidia* of the gods.

l. 1138. σώζοι, 'keep you safe,' the pres. denoting continuance.

l. 1140. δαιμόνων = 'the dead,' who were worshipped as δαίμονες. Cp. ll. 25, 1004 n. Death is styled 'king of the dead,' l. 843, as well as their 'priest,' l. 25. Usually an attributive gen. has the article when the other noun has it (τῷ τῶν δαιμόνων κοιράνῳ), but there are exceptions, though these are rare in prose authors. Cp. however Xen. *Cyrop.* vi. 3, 8 ἱππέων τοὺς ἡγεμόνας. [Another, but an inferior reading is κυρίῳ.]

l. 1142. τύμβον παρ' αὐτόν, 'close by the tomb.' Παρά with accus. marks *extension* in space as well as motion, as παρ' ἄλληλα, 'side by side,' παρὰ πρυμνήσια νῆος Hom. *Od.* xii. 32.

l. 1143. ἀναυδος, for two reasons; 1st because Alcestis was represented by a mute, there being no third actor in this play; 2ndly because of the belief that one under pollution could not speak till after purification. In Aesch. *Eum.* 426 this superstition is quoted in the case of a murderer, ἄφθογγον εἶναι τὸν παλαμναῖον λόγος.

l. 1146. ἀφαγνίσσεται, lit. 'unconsecrate herself,' i.e. release herself from her bond of consecration to the infernal powers (l. 76). The dat. θεοῖσι implies that the necessary rites of 'deconsecration' must be offered to those gods; else we should expect the gen. θεῶν after the ἀπό in the compound verb.

τρίτον, possibly an allusion to the *τρίτα*, or offerings made to the *δαίμων* on the third day after death; but more likely in reference to the well-known mystic character of the number three. Reputed instances of a return from death to life are so rare, that we can hardly expect to find illustrations elsewhere.

l. 1147. δίκαιος ὢν, not 'as you ought' (though it could mean this), but 'because you are a righteous man, continue to act piously,' &c. (*pres. imp.*). Heracles here defends Admetus for his hospitality, which he *had* thought excessive (l. 1017).

l. 1150. Eurystheus was the son of Sthenelus, who was the son of Perseus and Andromeda. Perseus claimed descent from Zeus by Danae.

l. 1152. αὐθις, 'some other day.' Cp. *Hel.* 713 ὁ δ' οὐ πονήσας αὐθις ἄλλυται κακῶς.

l. 1153. πόδα, cognate accus. Cp. l. 869, also νόστιμον πόδα, *Hec.* 939. [Other readings are δδόν and δόμον.]

l. 1154. τετραρχία. Thessaly was anciently divided into four districts,—Pthiotis, Thessaliotis, Hestiaeotis, and Pelasgiotis. If Admetus' dominions were as extensive as described in ll. 592 &c., they would include at least two of these. But Euripides may mean the four townships of Pherae, Iolcos, Boebe, and Glaphyra, mentioned by Homer, *Il.* ii. 711, as forming the dominions of Admetus.

l. 1155. ἐπ' ἐσθλαῖς συμφοραῖσιν, 'on this auspicious event.' Cp. Aristoph. *Equit.* 655 ἐπὶ συμφοραῖς ἀγαθαῖσι θύειν.

ιστάναι, 'to institute,' the official term. The poet transfers to Thessaly what was done at Athens by command of the oracles of Delphi and Dodona, referred to by Demosthenes in *Midiam*, i.e. χοροὺς ιστάναι καὶ κνισσᾶν ἀγνιδας καὶ στεφανηφορεῖν.

l. 1156. βουθύτοισι προστροπαῖς, 'prayers accompanied by the sacrifice of oxen;' Lat. *supplicatio*. Προστροπή is any prayer, but especially one offered with the view of averting pollution.

l. 1157. μεθηρμόσμεσθα, &c., 'we have changed' (lit. 'disposed ourselves') 'to a better life.' For μετά denoting change cp. μεταλλάσσειν, μεταβάλλειν, μετανοεῖν, &c. βίον is the accus. of the state into which the change is made. Cp. Aesch. *Prom.* 316 μεθάρμοσαι τρόπους νέους.

l. 1158. εὐτυχῶν ἀρνήσομαι, 'deny that I am prosperous.' Cp. ἀρνεῖ κατακτάς *Orest.* 1581. So φαίνομαι, οἶδα, &c., with participle implying the reality of the fact. See on ἵστω πορεύσας l. 444.

l. 1159. δαιμονίων = 'divine dispensations.' These lines also conclude the *Helena*, *Bacchae*, *Andromache*, and *Medea*; only in the last play the first line runs πολλῶν ταμίας Ζεὺς ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ. They are purely conventional, and would suit any play having an unexpected catastrophe.



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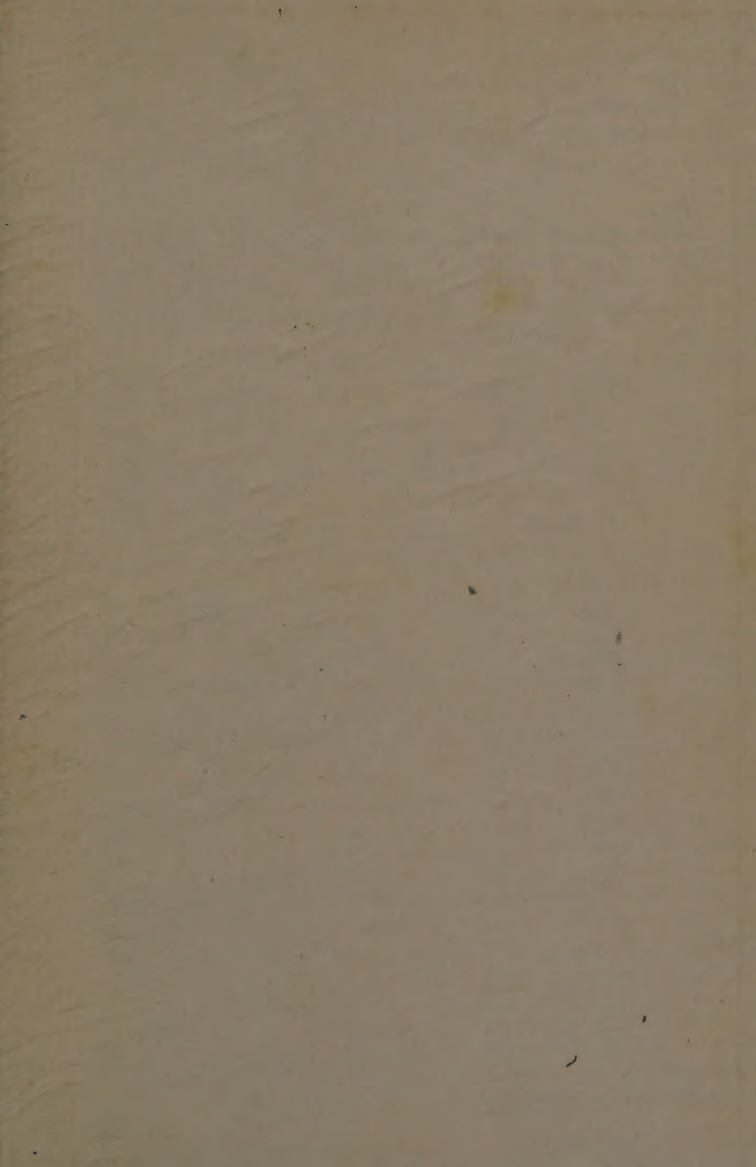
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